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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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$25M training facility for BSI OK'd

By JOEL D. PINAROC
joel_pinaroc@saipantribune.com
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

RELATED NEWS

➤ NMC to offer certificate in casino management. PAGE 6

The Commonwealth Lottery Commission on Tuesday agreed to a proposed temporary "live" training facility that will be established by Best Sunshine International, Ltd.

Best Sunshine will pour around $25 million to build the facility, which will be located at the first level of the DFS building in Garapan, according to Best Sunshine CEO Mark Brown.

Best Sunshine holds an exclusive, 40-year license to operate a casino in the Commonwealth, and the training facility is widely seen as a concrete start in the multi-billion-dollar integrated resort that the group has planned to set up in the CNMI.

Brown said Best Sunshine has penciled April 15 as start date to build the facility and a completion date "some time" in June.

The Commonwealth Lottery Commission, presided over by incoming Commerce Secretary Mark Rabauliman, with Finance

See BSI on Page 4

Gas prices up again, by 15 cents

JAYSON CAMACHO

Gasoline prices in the Commonwealth increased by 15 cents Tuesday afternoon, as shown in this Mobil signboard in Garapan.

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

Gasoline prices in the Commonwealth continue to rise, increasing by 15 cents as of Tuesday afternoon.

The price of regular gasoline at Mobil Oil Marianas increased to $4.059 per gallon, while diesel prices increased to $4.519.

See GAS on Page 4

Palms renovation on track for Oct. deadline

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Palm Resorts is being "cleaned out" for renovation work, ahead of a groundbreaking ceremony they aim to have next month, according to E Land Micronesian Resort senior hotel operations manager Dennis Seo yesterday.

The reopening of the Palms Resort would add a reported 313 rooms to a recovering tourism industry that's expected to need more rooms for looming casino and hotel investments and growing Chinese and Korean markets.

In an interview, Seo confirmed that a completion date for the Palms renovation is still set for October this year.

He told *Saipan Tribune* that right now the ongoing work is "just cleaning work," as they "get ready for renovation."

"It's just pulling out all the furniture…the fixtures from the rooms, restrooms," he said.

"We are still targeting reopening by October this year," he added.

It was earlier reported that the budget for the renovation was from $20 million to $30 million.

E Land's Construction Company will reportedly lead the renovation, with the help of local construction companies as subcontractors.

The Palms Resort is expected to reopen under one of E Land's own brands, after reported "challenges" in negotiations to use the global brand Sheraton.

NEW AMIM MEMBERS

JAYSON CAMACHO

Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas is sworn in as the new vice president of the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council yesterday morning at the Kanoa Resort. The group held its first general meeting this year.

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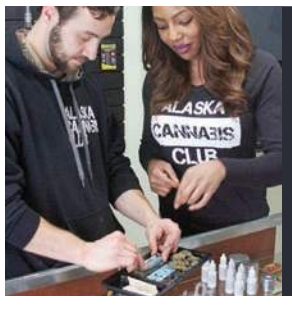

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Alaska becomes the third state to legalize marijuana.

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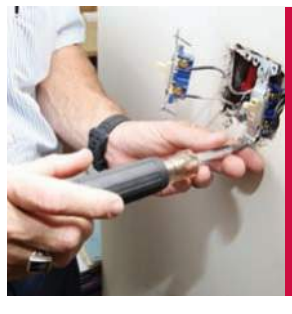

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

A shortage of qualified electricians makes it important to hire smartly.

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Local

NMC names Tan Siu Lin Foundation scholars

Tan Siu Lin Foundation scholarship awardees pose for a group photo after receiving their scholarships. First row, from left: Rachel Reyes, Roy Alegre, Mayleen Aldan, Peachy Quitugua, and Jeromalyn Santos. Second row, from left: TSL Foundation manager Maggie Sablan; NMC Financial Aid director Daisy Propst; Nikkael Agustines; Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan; NMC president Dr. Sharon Hart; Lean Teodoro; Jasmine Che; Joshua Santos; and Elvielynn Santos.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation and the Northern Marianas College recently announced the recipients of the Tan Siu Lin Foundation Scholarship Program. From a highly competitive selection process, the following students were selected:

- Alegre, Roy Luie Alidon
- Quitugua, Peachy Josifynn
- Reyes, Rachel Ashley P.
- Teodoro, Lean Dizon
- Agustines, Nikkael Mendoza
- Santos, Elvielynn Cepeda
- Santos, Jeromalyn Wanphen
- Aldan, Mayleen Rose Tudela
- Santos, Joshua Cabrera
- Che, Jasmine Padiernos

The scholarship program is part of the Tan Siu Lin Foundation's ongoing efforts to promote higher education among CNMI students. The program awards $1,000 per scholarship to students majoring in hospitality management, business, liberal arts, nursing, natural resources management, criminal justice, and education.

"We recognize the central role that the Northern Marianas College plays in the personal and professional development of CNMI students—and on a larger scale—the CNMI's workforce," said Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan. "We want to support that role by providing financial assistance to students who have the potential to excel academically and professionally."

The Tan Holdings Foundation was formed in 2002 and was renamed after the company's founder and chairman, Dr. Tan Siu Lin. Through the years, the Tan Siu Lin Foundation has launched initiatives and built trusted partnerships with a diverse array of individuals, families, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. The TSL Foundation's main mission is to better serve the regions where it operates to make such communities a better place to live.

"We are very grateful to the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for once again providing this scholarship," said NMC president Dr. Sharon Y. Hart. "The financial assistance will definitely make a significant impact in helping students pursue their educational goals."

The scholarships are based on merit and are awarded on the basis of the candidate's community involvement, academic background, and letters of recommendation. The written essay also plays a key role in the final selection of scholarship recipients.

The selection committee was composed of representatives from Tan Holdings and the Tan Siu Lin Foundation. ***(NMC)***

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Judge approves $4.6M task order for pipeline project

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David O. Carter approved Monday a request for a task order with a total funding ceiling of $4.6 million related to the construction of the stalled Commonwealth Utilities Corp. pipeline project by Gilbane Federal.

Carter approved the stipulation and task order 2 jointly requested by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the CNMI government, and CUC.

Gilbane Federal is a California-based full service construction company recently selected by the district court as Engineering and Environmental Management Company to expeditiously complete some CUC projects.

Meanwhile, Carter is expected to conduct a site visit again at CUC projects today, Wednesday, at 7:30am.

At a status conference on Monday, Carter asked the parties to update him on the progress of the ongoing CUC projects.

Gilbane Federal vice president Daryl Greenway apprised the court of the progress of the ongoing projects.

According to Gilbane Federal's task order summary sheet, the pipeline construction will commence work on March 5, 2015, and the completion date is July 1, 2016.

Last Feb. 5, the U.S. Department of the Interior approved an additional funding of $2.6 million to complete the pipeline project.

With the additional funds, DOI's total funding for the pipeline project now balloons to $8.1 million since the project was initiated in 2010.

The oil pipeline project is an 8-inch aboveground receiving pipeline that delivers diesel fuel from the Mobil oil facility to CUC Power Plants 1 and 2 in Lower Base. EPA had stated that until the pipeline is properly repaired or replaced, it poses a threat to the adjacent ocean.

CNMI mayors, municipal council members join AMIM

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

CNMI mayors and municipal council members took their oaths as new members of the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council members at the Kanoa Resort yesterday morning.

AMIM president and Dededo Mayor Melissa B. Savares swore in the new members at the group's first general meeting this year.

The newest members include Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, Northern Islands Mayor Jerome K Aldan, Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig, and members of the 13th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, 15th Tinian Municipal Council, and 15th Rota Municipal Council.

Savares urged the new members from the Commonwealth to work collaboratively with their counterparts in Guam.

Discussions focused on ways the Mariana Islands as a whole can work collaboratively to better the lives of many islanders.

Resolutions that were adopted last year by former AMIM members such as flights to each island and livestock and local produce were also discussed, while new matters taken up included cultural arts, crafts, and herbal vegetables, among others.

Savares also mentioned scholarship programs that AMIM provides, livestock and local produce to be sold among the islands through collaborative efforts called The Farmers Co-op, working on flights to be more efficient, addressing infestation that's destroying the islands' produce and plants, and promoting the islands through a cultural festival.

AMIM also elected a new vice president, San Nicolas, who succeeded former Tinian mayor Ramon Dela Cruz. San Nicolas was sworn in after winning the vice presidency with nine votes against SNIMC secretary Lareina Camacho.

"I want to thank everyone. Thank you for your support and I wish everyone the best of luck," San Nicolas said.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Officers of the Association of Mariana Islands' Mayors, Vice Mayors, and Elected Municipal Council Members hold a special meeting with the CNMI's own mayors and municipal council members. From left, AMIM sergeant-at-arms Dale E. Alvarez (Mayor of Santa Rita, Guam), AMIM president Melissa B. Savares (Mayor of Dededo, Guam), and AMIM treasurer George O. Hocog (15th Rota Municipal Council chair).

» San Nicolas elected as vice president

Aldan also was thankful for finally making the Northern Islands a part of AMIM.

"It is a pleasure to be here and I am thankful that AMIM invited the Northern Islands to sit in and become a part of their team," Aldan said.

AMIM was first formed in May 1990 and embraces Guam and the CNMI's mayoral and municipal council leaderships. The goal and objectives of AMIM is to enhance, promote, and preserve the cultural traditions and heritage of the people of the Marianas.

It also aims to motivate greater citizen interest and participation in municipal matters, work to strengthen the competency of local governing bodies, improve the quality of life on the islands, and strive to develop more programs that will mutually benefit all the islands.

The next AMIM meeting will take place on Rota in November.

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IF CHCC DOES NOT PAY ITS $14.7M BILL

'CUC must recover loss from the other customers'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. fails to pay its utility bills—now amounting to $14.7 million—the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. must recover that lost revenue from residential and commercial customers, translating to a 19.9-percent increase in their monthly bills, according to CUC executive director Alan Fletcher yesterday.

CUC legal counsel James Sirok called Fletcher to the witness stand at a hearing in Superior Court to explain the impact of CHCC's non-payment of bills amounting to $14,686,022 as of Jan. 2015.

The hearing was on CUC's motion to hold CHCC in contempt for allegedly ignoring a $1.3-million bill for utility services for three months. CUC alleged that the nonpayment caused CHCC's total overdue balance to balloon to $14.7 million.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman placed the matter under advisement. He said he will issue a written ruling shortly.

After CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña completed her testimony, Sirok asked the court to allow Fletcher to testify about CUC's analysis of CHCC receivables and the effect it will have if CHCC fails to pay CUC.

In his brief testimony, Fletcher said that from $418,240 in CHCC's receivables balance in October 2011, CHCC's unpaid bills rose to $14,686,022 in January 2015.

Fletcher said CUC's forecast total revenue for fiscal year 2015 is $88.5 million, including CHCC's unpaid balance of $14.7 million. This brings CUC's net revenue to $73.8 million, he said.

To offset CHC revenue loss, Fletcher said that CUC needs a rate increase of 19.9 percent from its remaining customers—both residential and commercial.

"Like all businesses, CUC depends on receipt of cash payments from customers to fund payroll, operating expenses, and capital repairs," he said.

Fletcher said that with the required 19.9-percent rate increase, this means the increase in average monthly charge required to offset CHC's nonpayment is $33.44 for residential customers consuming 350 kilowatts an hour and 10,000 water/wastewater, and $215.49 for commercial customers consuming 2,000 kilowatts an hour and 20,000 water/wastewater.

In her testimony why CHCC failed to pay CUC $1.3 million for the last three months of 2014 in violation of a court order, Muña said they didn't have the money since they paid their private vendors first.

Muña said they wrote the Office of the Management and Budget in January 2015 to give them a $400,000 advance on their allotments in order to be able to pay the utility bills. The request was not approved, she said.

Muña said they had to prioritize payments to private vendors because nonpayment was one of the things identified in the citations from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

Muña said she communicated with Gov. Eloy S. Inos and the Department of Finance to get funding to make payments to CUC. She said they're asking for funding assistance and not free funding from the government.

"We're saying we cannot afford to pay everybody," Muña said. "I cannot pay for something we don't have."

COP adopts Koblerville bus stops

Coral Ocean Point has adopted four bus stops of the Public School System in the nearby Koblerville area. During a windy afternoon yesterday, senior management officials and staff painted one bus stop beige ivory on the outside, a dark brown in the inside, and aim to paint their olive gold hotel logo as well.

According to senior hotels manager Dennis Seo, the hotel aims to "spread out" from the original four bus stops to paint others in the area.

Seo recently met with PSS to discuss these plans.

"Our company has been here for three years and we want to do some contribution to the community… Not only this, but we want to do some other things as well, like working with the [American] Red Cross. This is just the beginning," Seo said.

DENNIS B. CHAN

Coral Ocean Golf Resort senior management officials pose for a photo before painting a Koblerville bus stop yesterday. They aim to paint four other bus stops in surrounding area.

He said their sister companies on islands, the Palms Resort and the Pacific Islands Club, will aim to do the same for their surrounding communities.

"The basic idea is to grow with the community," he said.

Accompanying Seo yesterday were chief operating officer Taeho Kim, developmental manager Dohee Cho, human resource supervisor Margie Binuya, housekeeping supervisor Jennie Tengco, and other management team members. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

Rotary moves forward with Rota Dental Smiles project

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan is still moving forward with its Rota Dental Smiles project in collaboration with island officials.

Club secretary Lareina Camacho said changes to be made is to upgrade the facility and the municipality has moved forward in renovating the dental clinic.

"Now the ball lies [with] the Rotary Club. We are going to be tapping our sister club, the Rotary Club of Tokyo Atago, to assist us in furnishing the dental clinic as well as the other clubs within the district. So the Rotary Club is part of District 2750 and it is Tokyo-based and we're hoping that other Tokyo-based clubs would contribute financially to make this clinic happen this Rotary year," Camacho said.

The Rotary year will end this June 30. Tokyo Atago earlier offered to assist the Rotary Club of Saipan in the Rota Smiles Project.

"So that's our goal. Originally we were looking at this a year ago that we weren't going to be implementing until 2016. But we fast forwarded with this project," Camacho said.

Currently the Rotary Club has two dental chairs that were donated by the Seventh-Day Adventist Clinic. It still needs to purchase compressors and vacuums.

"That is just the actual clinic furnishing, but there will still be a need to provide for administrative supplies and the dental area," Camacho said.

Aside from Tokyo Atago's assistance, funding will come from local fundraising efforts such as the Las Vegas Night and the recently held McDonald's McFun Run.

Rota currently has no dentist or dental clinic. Residents have to travel to nearby islands such as Saipan or Guam to receive basic dental care at considerable costs.

The purpose of the Rota Smiles Project is to provide dental services for the people of Rota at the Rota Health Center in Songsong Village. The project will focus on building renovation and purchasing dental equipment and furnishings, estimated to cost a total of $50,000.

Rota mayor to hire five to maintain Tatachog dump

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig said his office is now working on having the island's dumpsite properly managed with the hiring of five personnel who will ensure that it complies with environmental regulations.

At the same time, Atalig said they are shipping from Saipan to Rota heavy equipment—a bulldozer, backhoe, and dump truck—to maintain the dump.

"We are now making progress and managing how it should have been and [we] have a solid waste design to manage it better," Atalig said in an interview yesterday at the Association of Mariana Islands' Mayors, Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council Members special meeting at the Kanoa Resort.

Atalig also said the next step to addressing the dumpsite is to create a new landfill. He didn't elaborate on how or when the landfill will be built but said it is one of the Rota Mayor's Office's priorities.

He said the new landfill might probably be in Tatachog where the dumpsite is currently located.

Atalig also noted that they had met with Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality officials to discuss the dumpsite violations that Rota and the Department of Public Work have to address. Responsibility for maintaining the dumpsite falls on the shoulders of the DPW's Solid Waste Division.

BECQ said that citations still exist for the Rota dump due to it being an open dump, with neither roof nor segregation.

An environmental impact study was earlier commissioned to determine the viability of having a fully operational sanitary landfill on Rota. The then-Fitial administration allocated $1.6 million in Capital Improvement Project monies to build the project.

BSI

From Page 1

Secretary Larrisa Larson, and Public Safety Commissioner James Deleon Guerrero as members, conducted the hearing on the temporary training facility on Capital Hill.

After hearing an overwhelming show of support from lawmakers, government agencies, and non-government groups, the commission held a closed-door executive meeting and after less than an hour, announced the decision.

Rabauliman, however, clarified that the commission has approved the "concept" of Best Sunshine's training facility but it will still have to review and finalize the proposal.

"We have to finalize and put the language together. The commission has approved the concept, which means we are on board of what Best Sunshine proposed," Rabauliman said, noting that the establishment of the training facility is not included in the provisions of Public Law 18-38, the casino law.

Rabauliman was not able to give an exact date as to when the commission will announce a final version of the proposal.

He stressed that the commission will make sure that the final language of the proposal will be "in line with the executive branch" of the government.

Employment

According to Brown, the $25-million investment for the training facility will need some 500 personnel that will be sourced locally.

Now that the commission has approved the proposed facility, Best Sunshine can now put job ads "in the newspapers" to fill in the vacancies, Brown said.

He said the 500 initial employees for the training facility will then be integrated into the manpower pool of a 250-room hotel that Best Sunshine will put up in a property adjacent to DFS.

According to Brown, the 250-room hotel is just "Phase 1" of the integrated resort plan. Phase 1, Brown said, is "one year and a half away" from being constructed.

The executive disclosed that Best Sunshine will be paying qualified employees a competitive base rate of $7.25 per hour for the training facility.

He said part of the training facility is dedicated to an actual casino game floor simulation and security systems. Training for other critical areas will also be conducted in the Garapan facility.

Support

The decision to approve the Best Sunshine facility is also being supported by the business community.

Alex Sablan, who heads the Saipan Chamber of Commerce as president, said the Chamber "welcomes the development."

Sablan, in an interview, said, "People need to be trained" as far as the casino industry is concerned and that the 500 job vacancies is a "good sign."

The executive said he is not familiar with the unemployment rate in the Commonwealth, but hiring a few hundred is a "good start" and will surely help address the islands' unemployment issue.

GAS

From Page 1

The gasoline prices for Shell Marianas also increased to the same levels at $4.059 and $4.519 for regular gasoline and diesel respectively.

Last Feb. 12, Mobil's regular gasoline was at $3.909, while the price per gallon for diesel was at $4.369. For Shell, regular gasoline was pegged at $3.91 a gallon, while diesel was pegged at $4.37 a gallon.

The two companies traditionally mirror their price movements.

According to www.fuelgaugereport.com, the average cost of regular gas in the U.S. mainland is $2.15 per gallon, while the national average is $2.30.

The average for diesel is at $2.865 a gallon.

The website also reported that the national average price for regular unleaded gasoline has increased for 28 consecutive days for a total of 27 cents per gallon, which is the longest streak of rising prices since last spring.

Commerce, DLNR appointees face Senate hearings

The Senate Committee on Executive Appointment and Government Investigation is set to conduct separate public hearings on the appointment of two key Cabinet department heads.

Mark O. Rabauliman, appointed as secretary of Department of Commerce, and Richard B. Seman, appointed as secretary of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, are set to face hearings today on Capital Hill.

All indications seem to point to the confirmation of the two appointees, as they are already taking on major concerns in their respective departments.

Rabauliman on Tuesday presided over a Casino Commission hearing on a casino-related issue, while Seman has been recently involved in a "position letter" on the proposed listing of 23 Marianas species under the Endangered Species Act.

In late January, Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres nominated former representative Seman to head DLNR, while also informing Rabauliman that he will stay on as DOC secretary. Both would serve in an acting capacity until the Senate confirms them.

Seman, who bid adieu to his House seat, said he is grateful for Inos and Torres' trust in him to lead once again an important agency like DLNR.

Seman served as DLNR secretary from 2004 to 2006 at the tail end of the administration of former governor Juan N. Babauta.

Rabauliman meanwhile said he looks forward to continue to lead the agency, which is responsible for growing the economy. ***(Joel D. Pinaroc)***

Man's bid for disturbing the peace charges to be dismissed is denied

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman denied yesterday a motion to dismiss the charges against a man who allegedly insisted on seeing his children at the home of his former girlfriend in San Roque.

Wiseman deferred ruling on Joseph Jones Villagomez's constitutional challenges to the information charging him with two counts of disturbing the peace until the matter goes to trial on March 4, 2015.

In considering the parties' arguments, Wiseman said he finds that additional facts are necessary to properly rule on Villagomez's vague-as-applied constitutional challenges.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Villagomez with two counts of disturbing the peace.

The OAG alleged that the defendant came to the residence of his former girlfriend during the early morning hours of Aug. 30, 2014, and knocked on her front door, causing her to be scared.

The OAG alleged that on the same day, Villagomez yelled profanities at his former girlfriend's brother.

Villagomez, through assistant public defender Eden Schwartz, moved to dismiss the charges, arguing that the charge is vague when applied to the facts of the case.

Schwartz argued that a reasonable person in Villagomez's position would not have known that arriving at a household member's residence at an "inconvenient hour" and knocking on the door would result in criminal consequences.

Schwartz also argued that a reasonable person would not have known that yelling profanities and causing people to become angry would result in criminal consequences.

Schwartz also challenged the constitutionality of the disturbing the peace statute, saying the law is overbroad when speech—including political and symbolic speech—can result in a criminal conviction if it annoys another a person.

The government, through assistant attorney general Shannon Foley, argued that consideration of additional facts would cure any alleged due process violations.

Foley also pointed out that Villagomez was drunk and aggressively used an offensive term against the male victim.

Foley argued that the court should uphold the disturbing the peace law as constitutional because "this court has not experienced great difficulty applying the statute in the past…"

In denying Villagomez's motion, Wiseman said the court, for good cause, may defer ruling on such a motion to dismiss until after a trial or until after the verdict so long as a party's right to appeal is not adversely affected.

Wiseman also ruled that he is not persuaded by Villagomez's argument that the statute is overbroad on its face. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

NMC board to vote for chair Thursday

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents is set to vote for their board chair this Thursday during a regular board meeting at 9am.

The election of officers has been tabled several times previously. But both chairman Frank Rabauliman and director of Institutional Effectiveness Jaqueline Che, in separate interviews, confirmed that they expect the election to be held this Thursday.

Rabauliman was elected unanimously in December 2013. He succeeded Juan T. Lizama, who had led the board during a period of accreditation sanctions the college had faced.

The board chair is seen as the "spokesperson" of the board, representing them and leading them as they govern the college. The position has a term of one year. Regents elect a chairperson every year.

Also scheduled for action is the voting of a board treasurer, according to a copy of the meeting's agenda.

Right now, Elaine Hocog Orilla is vice chairperson, Maria T. Peter is treasurer, while Lizama, William Torres, Michaela Sanchez, and Elizabeth Rechebai serve as regents. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

NMC to finalize annual report this week

The Northern Marianas College annual report for 2014 is still under review, but the college hopes to finalize it this week, according to director of Institutional Effectiveness Jacqueline Che.

The report will "highlight the positives of 2014," according to Che. Positives include the launch of a new bachelor's degree in business management, and the earning of accreditation status under the WASC Senior College and University commission.

The report will cover how the college works in "meeting workforce needs," according to Che, and will describe the number of students served or trained under these initiatives.

After, they will share it with the NMC's Board of Regents for review, she said. They will also share it with the Legislature, she said.

The college aims to meet with legislators next week Tuesday, according to college president Dr. Sharon Hart yesterday. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

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New Kagman Market – Kagman 1 & 2
New XO Market – Gualo Rai
Rising Market – Koblerville
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NMC to offer certificate in casino management

To meet workforce needs that are associated with the planned casino developments in the CNMI, the Northern Marianas College is quickly taking steps toward introducing a new certificate program in casino management.

According to the college, its Business Department is working with the College of Southern Nevada through a partnership made possible by the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education to launch its first Certificate of Achievement in Casino Management. This certificate will be 33 credits.

According to Barbara Merfalen, dean of Academic Programs and Services, the credits can be transferred into an associates degree for example into other WICHE institutions.

"This is just one of the many ways that the college is working to meet local workforce needs," said NMC president Dr. Sharon Hart. "We plan to roll out other programs soon to expand training opportunities for residents; degree programs require board approval."

"We are also excited at the possibility of having one of the faculty, with the approval from the department chair from the College of Southern Nevada, visit the island and offer his over 10 years of expertise in casino and gaming," said Chavel Green, NMC Business Department chairperson.

The college, with key personnel on Tinian and Rota, will carry out a needs assessment regarding ways that it can work together to leverage resources; provide courses online, onsite (Saipan), and credit and non-credit courses/training.

Key leaders at NMC recently met with Best Sunshine International, Ltd. to offer the college's assistance and expertise in preparing a future gaming workforce.

As a WICHE member, NMC has access to other members when looking at developing programs and courses that are not currently being offered at the institution. The resources available to us as a WICHE member are invaluable. ***(NMC)***

LUCKY SHOPPER CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lili Borja of Garapan celebrates after winning the $1,000 jackpot in the Northern Marainas Sports Association's scratch card lottery fundraiser. She bought her tickets at the New XO Market.

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is inviting qualified individuals to apply for the following positions:

Advertising Sales Agent
Associates degree in Business Administration or any related course. Minimum of 3 years solid experience in advertising and sales is required. Must have the ability to compose clear business correspondence and prepare and meet monthly sales targets. A background in a printing or newspaper business is an advantage. Proficient in MS Word, Excel and Power Point and must work flexible hours.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at Saipan Tribune, Inc. Human Resources Office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan or e-mail it to lt_recruitment@tanholdings.com. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Monday, March 09, 2015.

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Registration open for LTA's hotel and hospitality certification

The Latte Training Academy has opened registration for participants seeking to earn the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute certification. The globally recognized certification in the hotel and hospitality industry is limited to the first 25 eligible participants who register for the course. Classes will fun from March 2, 2015, to May 31, 2015, three times a week and will be held at the Marianas Business Plaza. As space is limited, interested parties are strongly encouraged to register at www.lattetrainingacademy.com or via email at lattetrainingacademy@outlook.com. Eligible participants may qualify for funding through a grant made available through the CNMI Department of Commerce; however, certain restrictions may apply.

"In response to the notification of award, the Latte Training Academy is moving quickly to begin the course. Eligible participants will be able to take the course at no charge. However, participants will be required to invest their time into the successful completion of the course. This includes regular attendance at scheduled classes, engagement in the job shadowing component, as well as the ability to pass the certification examination with a score of 70 percent or higher," said LTA board member Tina Palacios.

The course will provide successful students with two American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute certifications, including the GOLD and START certifications. The AHLEI certifications are widely recognized throughout the hotel and hospitality industry as the professional certification that is the ultimate distinction of professional excellence. The rigorous course requirements provide participants with foundational skills and knowledge in all aspects of the hotel and hospitality industry and showcase a dedication and commitment that many employers are seeking.

"We are excited to offer this course through the availability of this one-time grant funding made through the CNMI Department of Commerce. We have found tremendous success with our past graduates, with nearly 74 percent of students who graduated in May of 2014 either working or pursuing higher education," said LTA secretary Arielle Buyum. ***(LTA)***

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

Notice to the General Public and all Saipan-based Section 8 New Construction Multifamily Program Applicants

Mihaville and Koblerville Subdivisions
(February 10, 2015)

Pursuant to Section IX: Waiting List Management of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's (NMHC) revised Tenant Selection Plan, NMHC wants to respectfully inform the general public and all Saipan-based Section 8 New Construction Multifamily Program applicants of the following:

1. NMHC will **STOP** accepting applications for its Saipan-based Section 8 New Construction Multifamily Program for 2 bedroom units beginning on March 01, 2015, due to an excessive number of active Saipan applicants on the program's Waiting List. NMHC will notify the public as soon as it is ready to begin accepting applications.

2. NMHC will be updating the program's Waiting List for its Saipan-based Section 8 New Construction Multifamily Program for 2 bedroom units beginning on March 01, 2015, by removing applicants:

   a. Who are no longer interested in participating in the program;
   b. Who are no longer qualified for assisted housing; or
   c. Who fail to respond to a written request to update the information on their applications.

Written notices will be mailed out to every applicant listed on the program's waiting list. Upon receipt of a written notice, applicants are requested and **required** to contact NMHC at Tel. Nos. 234-6866 or 234-9447 or via email at housingdiv@nmhc.gov.mp.

Thank you and please direct all questions regarding this public notice to David Chargualaf, Program and Housing Division Manager, or Melinda Babauta at NMHC's Main Office on Saipan at any of the aforementioned telephone numbers or via email at phdmanager@nmhcgov.net and housingdiv@nmhc.gov.mp, respectively.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Half-day session at DMS tomorrow

This is to inform all Dandan Middle School parents that tomorrow, Thursday Feb. 26, 2015, will be a half-day session for all students. Students will be release at 12:10pm, so if your child is a car rider, be sure to pick up your child no later than 12:30pm. All DMS staff will be attending a Professional Day Workshop at San Antonio Middle School starting at 1pm. Note that all students will be returning on Friday, Feb. 27, 2015. ***(DMS)***

Half-day session at KHS tomorrow

This is to inform all parents and guardians that Kagman High School students are scheduled to have a half-day session on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2015. Dismissal time will be at 12pm due to Faculty and Staff State Wide Professional Development. For more information, call the KHS main office at 237-3840 or email khsayuyu@kagmanhigh.org. ***(PR)***

Half-day session at SAMS tomorrow

San Antonio Middle School will have a half-day session tomorrow, Feb. 26. Students will be dismissed at 12pm. Teachers and staff are required to participate in workshops offered by Administrative Services, Student Services, and Instructional Services. ***(SAMS)***

Kindergarten enrollment at SVES

San Vicente Elementary School registration for school year 2015-2016 is scheduled to begin on May 26-29, 2015 for (Kindergarten only) from 9am through 1pm in the school's main office. For all incoming Kindergarten students, the child must be 5 years on or before Sept. 30, 2010 as per BOE policy (date of birth should be between Sept. 1, 2009 and Sept. 30, 2010).

Registration requirements: copy of birth certificate; original health certificate (from public health or any private clinic); updated medical insurance (Medicaid, any government insurance or accidental insurance); map of residential location; copy power of attorney/legal guardianship (if applicable); and copy of report card or certificate of completion (from any pre-school)

For more information, contact 664-3981 through 84 or 237-3791. ***(PR)***

BECQ preps to ensure military complies with federal process

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental Coastal Quality will keep its eye on potential military impacts to water, land, and air, ahead of draft environmental statement reportedly due in April for a proposed joint live fire training on Tinian and Pagan.

BECQ will also have another avenue through the federal consistency provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act to express their concerns over impacts to coastal resources, on top of the National Environmental Protection Act review that's currently ongoing.

Under this provision, federal agency activities must comply to "the maximum extent possible" with local coastal management plans and law.

Both NEPA and federal consistency will give the CNMI a chance to express its concerns to the military. The federal consistency process will play out after public commenting on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

When asked what areas of concern BECQ is eyeing, administrator Frank Rabauliman said, "The whole gamut."

"Water, land, air," he added. "We're concerned about the threats to the corals, the threats to the flora, the fauna."

He said he initially had thought the military was going to have separate impact statements for Tinian and Pagan but because they are combined, he said his bureau will have to provide comments "that would be sweeping."

"[Military officials] haven't come out with a document that says this is the scope of our operation [the EIS]. The only document that I am aware of is the letter of Intent to Proceed with the EIS. …You look at that document and they pretty much put everything on the table: mine warfare, aerial bombardment, artillery fires—everything that you could use to do conduct multinational training is on the table," he said.

"So in talking to my staff, what we need coming to the table—because that's the only document that I am aware of that is black and white—is to realize that's the scope of work that they are proposing because it is in the *Federal Register*," he added.

Leading the federal consistency process is federal programs specialist Megan Jungiwattanaporn of the Division of Coastal Resource Management, under BECQ.

"DCRM's mandate is to both protect conservation and development opportunities as related to the coastal zone," she told *Saipan Tribune*. "We'll be looking at our laws and seeing whether the military is complying with them. If they aren't, we'll have opportunities under the NEPA process to voice our concerns and again under the federal consistency process to negotiate with the military," she said.

She clarified that "maximum extent practicable" means federal activity should be fully consistent with CNMI laws unless a federal legal requirement prohibits full consistency.

"It would be the [Department of Defense's] job to tell us what law that is," she said. "DOD will send us a federal consistency letter saying whether they comply with our laws or not. We'll have a chance to concur or object. If the CNMI objects, we'll have a chance to negotiate with the military. If we can't resolve our differences, we can ask [the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] to help mediate. The federal consistency process ends here."

If a solution is still not found, the CNMI could look at other processes, including litigation, she said.

Muña clarifies board meeting issue

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board has not had any meetings since May last year.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña clarified, though, that even though meetings have not been held, she had communicated with board members, especially board chair Joaquin Torres.

Muna said that Public Law 16-51 states that "the CEO [has the power] to convene from time to time as the CEO determines necessary and appropriate meetings of the board."

"Torres is definitely free to request that I convene a meeting but I haven't been requested that at all," Muña said.

"We acknowledge that an effective advisory board can be helpful to the organization. An advisory board, however, cannot be effective if they are micromanaging or demanding they get and keep an office so they become part of management. We can certainly make this work but I believe it begins with the respect that there is a line between management and the board and we all need to respect that," Muña said. ***(Jayson Camacho)***

Learn how to do your taxes with Chamber's workshop

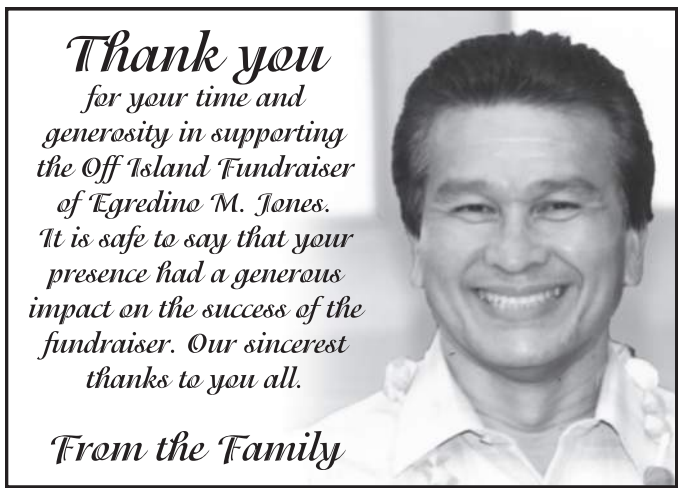
The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will host a tax workshop to assist individuals, entrepreneurs, and small business owners gain a better understanding of important tax issues and to provide the information needed to meet tax filing obligations.

The three-hour workshop will focus on the basic overview of corporation, partnership, non-profit and individual tax regulations. Corporate tax topics will include formation of corporations, filing due dates, estimated tax payments, and graduated income tax rates. Also covered are the alternative minimum tax, personal holding company tax, accumulated earnings tax, and passive activity loss rules. The portion on partnership will include formation of partnerships, filing due dates, and withholding taxes when there is a foreign partner. Also covered are the treatment of partners as self-employed individuals and the self-employment tax. Capital accounts and tax basis rules will also be discussed.

Small businesses are the foundation of the Commonwealth's economy. This tax seminar will help entrepreneurs to understand and follow our tax laws so they can focus on making their businesses successful.

Tax experts from Ernst & Young (Edmund Brobesong) and Burger Comer Magliari (Dave Burger) will conduct the seminar at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce office on March 17 from 9am to noon. Coffee, tea, and light refreshments are included.

Registration for the seminar is now being accepted at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce office at the Marianas Business Plaza Suite 315, third floor. Call 234-7150 or email administrator@saipanchamber.com or coordinator@saipanchamber.com to reserve your attendance. Registration fee for Chamber members is $25; $35 for non-Chamber members. Seating is limited to the first 40 paid attendees. ***(SCC)***


Thank you
for your time and generosity in supporting the Off Island Fundraiser of Egredino M. Jones. It is safe to say that your presence had a generous impact on the success of the fundraiser. Our sincerest thanks to you all.
From the Family

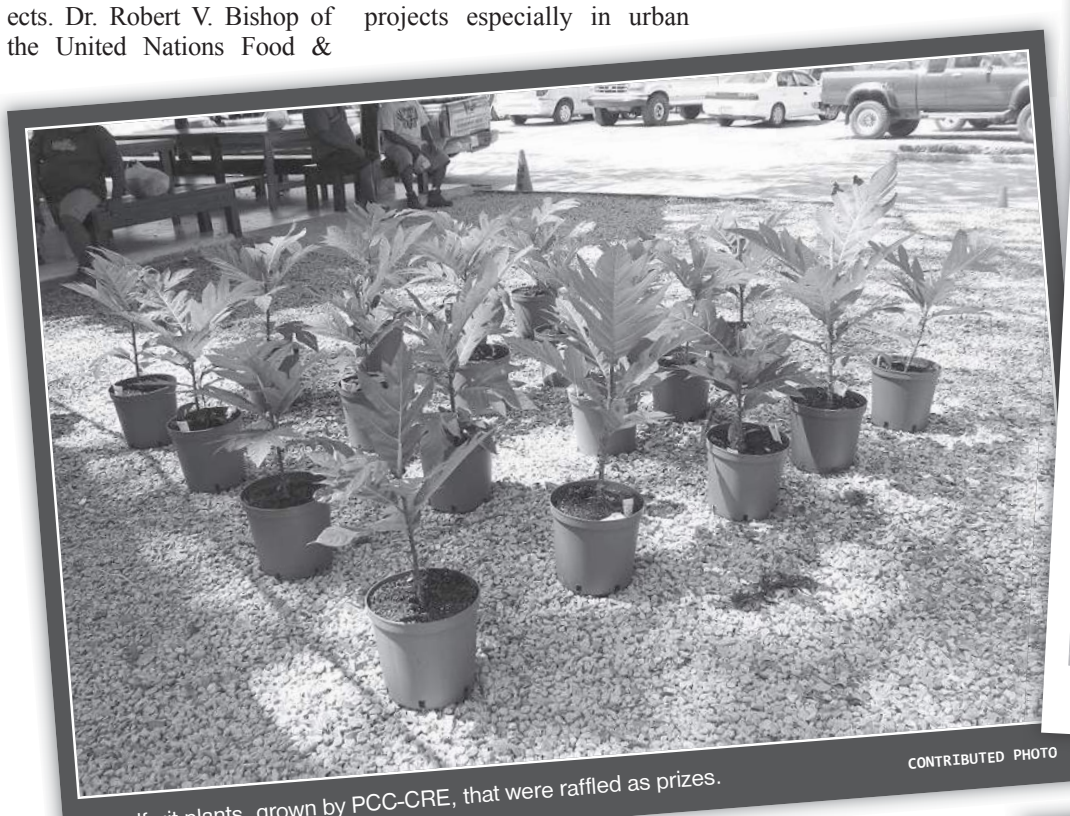
Palau college takes part in farmers' group showcase

The Cooperative Research & Extension Department of the Palau Community College participated in a showcase for the Palau-Taiwan Farmers' Association on Feb. 10, 2015. CRE set up booths that featured its current agriculture, food technology, and aquaculture projects. Dr. Robert V. Bishop of the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization and representatives from the Belau National Museum also participated in the event.

Information showcased by CRE included recipes that used local produce as ingredients in nutritious meals, steps to starting small-scale farm projects especially in urban home settings, and posters explaining the importance of aquaculture. A raffle drawing in the afternoon allowed members of the community to win breadfruit plants that were grown at the CRE facility in Ngeremlengui.

The Palau-Taiwan Farmers' Association Showcase promoted local products via methods applicable in Palau. By promoting local products, PTFA aims to increase dependency and use of local-grown produce in support of local self-reliance. CRE is a land grant system that seeks to collaborate with partners and clients in order to generate, develop, and disseminate practical and sustainable technologies and knowledge in agriculture, aquaculture, environment, food, and human sciences that are beneficial to the people of Palau.

CRE implements the Agriculture Experiment Station, Cooperative Extension Service, and Residential Instruction of the College of Micronesia Land Grant Programs in Palau. ***(PCC)***



Breadfruit plants, grown by PCC-CRE, that were raffled as prizes. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Chips, starch, and flour made from locally grown tapioca and taro. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Aurora Del Rosario, seated, provides information about sustainable food production.

Dr. Bishop demonstrates how to make treats, like candy, with local ingredients. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hydrophonics is a sustainable food production system for urban areas. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local products made from local ingredients showcased by the Belau National Museum. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

5 things to know about Takata air bag recall probe

Japanese auto parts maker Takata Corp. isn't cooperating with the government's investigation of its air bags, the National Highway Safety Administration said Friday as it imposed fines of $14,000 a day that will continue until key safety information is provided.

Here are five things to know about the Takata air bag recalls:

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE AIR BAGS? The inflators propelled by ammonium nitrate can explode with too much force, spewing shrapnel into drivers and passengers. At least six people have been killed and 64 injured worldwide due to the problem. Seventeen million vehicles have been recalled in the U.S. by 10 automakers since 2008. Only about 2 million, or 12 percent, have been fixed, largely due to lack of parts.

WHY ARE SOME RECALLS ONLY IN AREAS OF HIGH HUMIDITY? Government investigators believe that prolonged exposure to moisture in the air makes the inflator chemical burn too fast, creating too much pressure. That can shatter metal canisters meant to contain the explosion that inflates the bags. But they don't know exactly how much humidity over what time frame can cause the problem. Driver's side air bags have been recalled nationwide, but recalls of passenger side air bags were limited to Florida, Puerto Rico, areas near the Gulf of Mexico including Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and Louisiana, as well as Guam, Saipan, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Hawaii.

WHAT DOES TAKATA SAY? Takata has challenged the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's demand for a national recall of driver's air bags, but automakers did it on their own. The company says the safety administration has authority to require recalls by automakers, not a parts supplier like Takata. It also says tests of 10,000 inflators don't show any reason for the recalls to be expanded.

WHAT IS BEING DONE NOW? The government says it must be able to explain what is going wrong with the air bags and why in order to force Takata into a national recall. Three groups are testing the air bags: Takata, an independent contractor hired by the company, and a group of 10 automakers. Also, the government plans to issue an order next week requiring people who have filed lawsuits against Takata to share with federal investigators the results of safety tests on air bags that were involved in crashes, and making inflators available to plaintiffs lawyers for testing.

HOW CAN I BE SURE MY AIR BAGS ARE SAFE? While the testing continues, the only thing you can do is check to see if your car has been recalled and get the repairs done as soon as possible. To check, go to https://vinrcl.safercar.gov/vin/ and key in your 17-digit vehicle identification number, which is stamped on your dashboard near the driver's side windshield. The site will tell you if there's a recall. If so, contact your dealer. ***(AP)***

Jewell to address insular areas group today

»Kia'aina to lead discussions on climate change, workforce dev't, tourism, Compact Impact aid

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Feb. 25 (Saipan time), Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and White House Intergovernmental Affairs Director Jerry Abramson will co-host the 2015 Senior Plenary Session of the Interagency Group on Insular Areas to discuss issues of critical importance to leaders of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The event will be livestreamed at www.doi.gov/live.

Jewell and Abramson will give opening remarks at 8:30am EST. Assistant Secretary Esther Kia'aina, partnering with various federal and territorial officials, will lead panel discussions on climate change, workforce development, tourism and financial assistance under the Compacts of Free Association.

Jewell

This is the sixth meeting of the IGIA since President Obama reestablished the group in 2010 under Executive Order 13537, to address policies for the U.S. insular territories. Among its duties, the IGIA solicits information from the island governors and other elected officials, develops recommendations to address issues of concern, and advises the President on establishing, modifying and implementing federal policies that advance the social, economic and political development of the islands. The IGIA is co-chaired by the Secretary of the Interior and the White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. ***(DOI)***

OIA releases $2.4M for health and education projects

WASHINGTON, D.C.—This week Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina approved and released a total of $2.4 million in funding under the OIA Technical Assistance program for fiscal year 2015 to support health, education and social service projects for the U.S. territories and Freely Associated States.

These grants include $1.3 million for the Four Atolls' Section 177 Health Care Program in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to help address the medical needs of residents; $1.1 million for the Close Up Foundation to support civic education programs for Insular Area students; and $75,000 to the Partners in Development Foundation for a non-governmental initiative to help mitigate the impacts in U.S. jurisdictions of migrants from the Freely Associated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau.

■ **FOUR ATOLL HEALTH CARE:** Kia'aina has released $1,253,714 for the Four Atolls' Section 177 Health Care Program, which provides special health program services to the people of Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap, and Utrôk in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Funding made available this year will support continued ophthalmic service, dental health care, and train newly hired doctors to support the various health care programs, including a newly integrated diabetes care program. The Four Atolls' Section 177 Health Care Program partially addresses the medical needs of Marshall Islands residents injured by the U.S. Nuclear Testing Program on those atolls from 1946 to 1958.

"We are now able to release 2015 technical assistance funds for a variety of projects all critical to the livelihood and support of insular area populations," said Kia'aina. "We have important obligations to uphold to the people of the Four Atolls to which we are pleased to provide health care assistance."

■ **CLOSE UP FOUNDATION:** Kia'aina has granted $1,125,000 to the Close Up Foundation to conduct civic education programs for students and teachers in the U.S. territories and Freely Associated States.

"The Close Up Program provides valuable opportunities for civic education about our Federal Government and democracy to youth in our Insular Areas," said Kia'aina. "It is always nice to get assistance for this worthwhile program from the insular areas themselves. Therefore, I would like to commend the family and school donations from St. Croix, and the Thomas Middle and High School programs in the U.S. Virgin Islands for collectively raising $30,000 to supplement their Close Up activities. The Republic of the Marshall Islands High School has also shown their commitment to youth by providing $10,000."

■ **PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT:** Kia'aina has granted $75,000 to the Partners in Development Foundation to help stand up a Micronesian non-profit organization in Hawaii to develop a One Stop Center that would provide social adjustment services to help migrants from the Freely Associated States find housing, employment, education and other forms of assistance.

"The final project in our grant awards announcement supports OIA efforts to help mitigate the impact of Freely Associated State migrants on the U.S. jurisdictions where they have chosen to reside," said Kia'aina. "We'd like to support a similar operation for Guam."

Residents of the Freely Associated States may enter the United States to live, go to school and work under the terms of the Compacts of Free Association which the United States negotiated with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. ***(OIA)***

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BARBARA CABRERA SANTOS
Address: P.O. Box 7125 SVRB,
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. No.: (670) 788-6670

Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter Of The Adoption Of: JOSHUA ENSIK SANTOS, Minor Child	) FCD-AD-) CIVIL ACTION) NO. 15-0061
By: JUAN JOSEPH C. SANTOS, and BARBARA CABRERA SANTOS, Petitioners	) **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on April 20, 2015 at 1:30 P.M. in Courtroom 205A, before the Honorable Judge Govendo.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2015.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Name: JUAN JOSEPH C. SANTOS
BARBARA CABRERA SANTOS
Address: P.O. Box 7125 SVRB,
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. No.: (670) 788-6670

Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter Of The Adoption Of: JOSEPH INSIK SANTOS, Minor Child	) FCD-AD-) CIVIL ACTION) NO. 15-0062
By: JUAN JOSEPH C. SANTOS, and BARBARA CABRERA SANTOS, Petitioners	) **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on April 20, 2015 at 1:30 P.M. in Courtroom 205A, before the Honorable Judge Govendo.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2015.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

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FACSIMILE: (671) 477-2511

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ANZ GUAM, INC., formerly known as CITIZENS SECURITY BANKS (GUAM), INC., Plaintiff, vs. **JESUS T. LIZAMA dba VICTORIA HOTEL, J&JEV ENTERPRISES, INC., and the BANK OF GUAM,** Defendants.	**Civil Action No. 00-0296 D** **NOTICE OF POSTPONEMENT OF AUCTION/ JUDICIAL SALE.**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Auction/Judicial Sale for the following properties described below is hereby **POSTPONED** until further notice. The auction presently scheduled for March 27, 2015 at 10 am the Law Office of Robert T. Torres will not proceed and shall be postponed. The Auction/Judicial Sale shall be re-noticed by publication in the same manner as authorized by the Superior Court, when so deemed appropriate by the undersigned appointed Auctioneer. No bids shall be accepted nor considered until the appropriate re-notice of the auction.

AUCTION/JUDICIAL SALE: POSTPONED FOR THE FOLLOWING LOTS:

a. LOT 001 D 13, (formerly known as Block 3, Lot 1), as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 001 D 00, the original of which was registered 30 SEP 70 as Document No. 512 at Land Registry, Saipan.

b. LOT 001 D 14, (formerly known as Block 3, Lot 2), as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 001 D 00, the original of which was registered 30 SEP 70 as Document No. 512 at Land Registry, Saipan.

c. TRACT 21732-9, part of original Tract 21732-R1, AH 140), as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 2085/84, the original of which was recorded 08 AUG 84 as Document No. 84-1439 at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

SO NOTICED this 17th day of February, 2015.

/s/ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

Job Vacancy Announcement

Strategic Gaming Solutions, Inc. has immediate job openings for the following positions:

Position: Cook (2)
Position Summary: To prepare and cook food for a small restaurant, control wastage, clean galley and kitchen appliances and work areas, to ensure cleanliness and a functional operation and to be able to prepare and cook food promptly, in presentable and delectable way.

Position Requirement: High school graduate. GED or equivalent plus 3 years work experience as cook in a restaurant or hotel. Preferably with experience in Western, Japanese and Chinese cuisines. Must be energetic with an excellent track record in hospitality and who thrives in a fast-paced service environment. Must have strong team work skills. Must be willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Highly motivated, organized and self-discipline. Must be able to communicate in English and Chinese language.

Position: Waitress (2)

Position Summary: To take orders and serve food and beverages to patrons on the Gaming floor and restaurant in the Club. Maintain the Club presenting a clean and presentable appearance.

Position Requirement: High school graduate. GED or equivalent plus 2 years work experience as waitress in a restaurant or hotel. Able to communicate clearly and possess a good command of verbal and written English. Preferably Chinese Speaking. Must have good organizational skills, self-discipline and problem solving skills.

Position: Bartender (2)

Position Summary: Require an energetic, professional staff member who has an excellent track record in hospitality and who thrives in a fast-paced service environment. Focused on professionalism and providing a superior customer experience. The ideal candidate must possess in depth knowledge about Wines, Spirits, Cocktails and other drink ingredients.

Position Requirement: College Graduate Degree or equivalent. Able to communicate clearly and possess a good command of verbal and written English. A minimum of 2 years' experience working within a 4* / 5* star establishment as a Bartender.

Position: Electronic Gaming Machine Technician (1)

Position Summary: Responsible for the efficient running of all electronic gaming machines, servers and IT systems. Repair, service and maintain electronic gaming machines in order to minimize down time of machines which results in loss of revenue. Organize the activities of maintenance and technician contractors.

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED, technical school plus a minimum of 3 years work experience as a slots or e-gaming machine technician in a casino or equivalent or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training in e-gaming machines repair, service, and maintenance skills can be demonstrated. Able to communicate clearly in and possess a good command of verbal and written English. Knowledge of various types of electronic gaming equipment used on casino floor and demonstrate the skills and ability to diagnose problems, take corrective action necessary, and ensure device is operational as quickly and efficiently as practical.

Position: Guest Service Manager (1)
Position Summary: To ensure that excellence in service is provided to Club's guests through Guest Services and that appropriate complimentary privileges are accorded Junkets and Premium Players and that all their needs and requirements are attended to.

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED, technical school plus a minimum of 3 years work experience in a casino or equivalent or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training and at least minimum experience in Supervisory Position. Able to communicate clearly and possess a good command of verbal and written English and Mandarin Chinese. Excellent Public Speaking and communication skills. Computer literacy. Word Processing skills. Effective negotiating skills. Effective Problem solving skills.

Please send detailed resume by email to: hr@clubcsaipan.com. Deadline for submission of completed applications is on March 2, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

Strategic Gaming Solutions, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

We know the drill, and don't like it

As a federal judge determines how many billions BP should pay for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Obama administration is pushing a troubling plan to allow drilling in the Atlantic Ocean off the East Coast from Virginia to Georgia.

Environmentalists say President Barack Obama is suffering from "oil spill amnesia," and the oil companies no doubt hope the American public is suffering a memory lapse, too. Obama withdrew an offshore drilling plan in 2010, shortly after BP's oil rig exploded, killing 11 people and spewing 200 million gallons of crude into the Gulf of Mexico over 87 days.

Much of the mess remains: Florida State University oceanographers estimate 10 million gallons of oil is still stuck to the seafloor. The disaster also inflicted economic pain in the billions and wiped out an unknown number of plants and animals. Although the carcasses of almost 1,000 dolphins and 500 sea turtles were recovered, scientists say there is no accounting for the number that weren't.

Deepwater Horizon was 41 miles off Louisiana, yet its debris field spread to Florida's gulf coast, where tar balls as well as dead and dying marine life washed up. That makes the administration's assurances that Atlantic drilling would take place 50 miles offshore less than comforting. And Obama's oil rigs would be in the paths of tropical storms and the fierce waves and winds they marshal.

Disturbingly, for all the talk about improved safety standards since the BP oil spill, no new protections have been required as a result. No related legislation has been passed by Congress, and while the administration says new safety rules are in the works, it's hard to understand why none are in place five years later.

The president's plan, which also protects sensitive waters off Alaska, has pleased coastal Republican governors who say the oil industry will fire up their economies. But the benefits won't be as bountiful as they claim. During recently concluded testimony to determine fines against BP and a codefendant, University of Wyoming energy expert Charles Mason said the oil giant was of only "moderate importance" to the gulf region's economy. Meanwhile, its spill hurt important industries like tourism and fishing, along with a broad range of other businesses, from florists to banks.

The Interior Department estimates that three billion gallons of oil and 31 trillion cubic feet of natural gas is stored within the continental shelf. But especially as the nation strives to expand alternatives to dirty fossil fuels and stem greenhouse-gas pollution, tapping reserves off the East Coast isn't worth the threat to the planet and its plants and animals—including us.

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AND IN THE CATEGORY OF POLITICIANS WHO SAY ONE THING IN THE CAMPAIGN AND ANOTHER IN OFFICE...
OH, GOSH, THIS IS A LONG LIST.
The Political Awards
KOTERBA
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

Let it snow

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.

We are still into the "frozen" ambience as snow covers the ground in *Dong Bei,* though not as much as the dumping North America got of late.

With the 15-day Spring Holiday observed (my language studio is closed the 13th to the 27th as two of my three partners went home, one to Hangzhou in Zhejiang near Shanghai, and the other to Shanxi west of Beijing; the latter stranded in Beijing for two days down with colds as there was no seat on the train), I've kept indoors these snowy days of spring.

Which is just fine. It allows me to digest the recent trip I took to the Philippines where I tasted the cool ambience of rich Tagaytay highlands, munched lunch (not much to write home about) at the Escudero estate in Quezon while cool water ran through bare feet (now that was quite a tickle between toes), and got colds in Greenhills' Ortigas overlooking old Shaw Boulevard built up after I left Mandaluyong *(labas 'di loob)* in the '70s.

I boarded a Victory Liner for a midnight trek to Metro Baguio that now extends its suburbs to Benguet's La Trinidad, once the vegetable capital of the region; the surrounding hills ascending to the summer capital have houses to the border of La Union. A local bus line took passengers with six backpacking Dutch-speaking Netherlanders from Baguio all the way to Episcopal well-mannered Sagada.

My eldest sister, one of five siblings who opted to remain in Pea Eye with retired husband, ex-radioman to Danding Cojuangco's corporate needs during the martial law reign of Ferdie and Meldy, proffered the welcome mat at their Parañaque dwelling. Of her other four siblings, three moved to Hawaii and I am a peripatetic pedagogue adventuring in China.

My sister and her husband gathered brood and feted me to lunch at the *Dampa* in Parañaque where customers buy fresh produce and sea creatures at the nearby market, then turn it over to an eatery that prepares the viand to feast on. Absent was a niece who lawyers in Melbourne with husband and young son. Her brothers are in electronic manufacturing in the Cavite-Batangas area, well off enough for one of the two to pick up the lunch tab, equivalent to two months of my pay in China, without batting an eye.

I holed out in Parañaque for a couple of days, nursing the cold that got worse in the Baguio trek before hitching a ride with PAL to the emerald reunion of class INHS60 in Laoag City.

At the main reunion event, I counted 30 female classmates and eight male, so we were about 70 with guests and spouses. The venue had a minimum charge for a 100 heads so I expected the class treasurer to remind me of the "out-of-country" fee that the rich *Norte Americano* gladly doled out.

Having originated from China, the treasurer did not bother to remind me of my attendance "fee" and knowing the state of my bank account, I sidled up to the only classmates who married each other (they have a house across the Hudson from Manhattan and a Florida winter home) and asked if they would cover for me moolah-wise. They graciously smiled their assent!

The treasurer was my secret crush back in high school who did not give me the time of day when my heart was helplessly pining for her attention, but in the last five years she and I nursed the possibility of the Argentine tango, complete with teeth-clenched red rose that two classmates do not tire to provide, but we keep the prospect in the mythical realm. I am sure the treasurer is confident in her skills on the dance floor, but I am not sure I can rely on mine, not to mention the *tuhod* strength to execute the requisite swirls and dips.

I stopped in Buenos Aires once and watched the airport storm troopers march like they were ready to "Heil Hitler" the Fuhrer. Viewing the rather beautiful but brutish hedo-masochistic precision of the tango, I decided it best to keep it in my imagination rather than "execute" it on the dance floor!

As snow fell this week, folks observed Spring Festival with boom-booms in red wrappers to loudly welcome the Lunar New Year, China's combined celebration of "Christmas/New Year." Folks headed home to hearth to share *niangao* (rice cakes) and *jiaozi* (dumplings) with family. It is an ingrained reflexive act. I joined my host family for dinner on New Year's Eve and watched the midnight display of sparklers' flare, cracked the fireworks' noise, and waved red banners to scare off malignant spirits (while my hosts snoozed the bottled spirit away). I ushered my lonesome to the Year of the Lamb.

My *bulong* (whisper) to high school classmates for financial assistance (and my mention in this reflection) gave and gives permission to everyone, lambs and rams alike, to shun the Pinoy preoccupation with "face," the *"ano na lang ang sasabihin nila"* syndrome (what will people say), and just be who we actually are, regardless of social standing or status, forsaking anxiety over the financial health of the phooey bank account!

"Let it snow" is my affirmation of the cold. Of that, I am richly endowed with!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Comically redundant

Let's slide into bland, if not comedy material, we've seen and heard in recent past. Some are serious but so royally mishandled it's ridiculously comical. Occasionally it's good to slip into humor just to ease our troubled minds. Here goes:

A dysfunctional Legislature ignores its own inadequacies, lecturing CHC it must work together—board and CEO. Legislators conveniently ignored that initial failure started at its door when it simply denied funding for the hospital for several years now. What gall lecturing when the greater failure is on its side! Einstein said two things he can't stand, the universe and stupidity! Which side are you on *leyisleche*?

■■■

China has begun cracking down on the huge production of crystal meth, according to a story in the SCMP. This move should bring its "loose" pharmaceutical industry under its radar screen to slam global production of the lethal substance. This, plus purging corruption on gambling, ought to do the global community good moving forward.

■■■

Legislators and the administration aren't on the same page on the issue of divert airport. The legislators are still trying to come to terms with what it should do while the administration has begun talking to top guns from the Department of Defense. A good example where the left hand doesn't necessarily know what the right hand is doing.

■■■

CUC ought to know that the hospital and schools aren't out to make a profit. One teaches our children, the other works the clock to heal our people. Therefore both entities must be given the "preferred rate" over others. I suppose CUC's CEO needs even a used anchor to come to terms with this issue.

■■■

Pharmaceuticals demonized use of coconut until a study confirmed otherwise. I mean, how do you disparage a part of our daily diet that has kept us healthy for thousands of years?

Then came "no more red meat." Now health experts say carbohydrates is the culprit in the formation of fat that is lodged in our arteries. So more red meat is in order? Eh, moderation is the answer!

■■■

Magoo has gone to his friend and loaned money one too many times. His friend got tired and recently refused him outright. Said Magoo, "Then how can I pay you if you don't loan me some more?" None wanted to get into discussing principal and principle owed! Ooops!

■■■

The NMI has seen an historic number of shipwrecked passengers struggling in the Sea of Bankruptcy. Most are now suffering for hypoxia but would slug it out until they no longer could see daylight. What a way to sail into the sunset.

■■■

The SCC is looking for used anchor to donate to Rep. Roman Benavente to prevent the price of basic goods from skyrocketing. A member of the Chamber said the help should give the representative some time to figure out the beast as a policymaker.

■■■

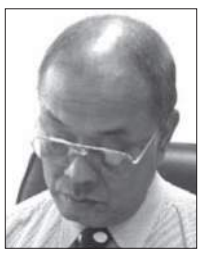
A grammar school kid and friends were walking home after school. Would you believe they are talking about the bad economy? Perhaps we ought to bring a busload of them to Capital Hill for a day's excursion at the lawn between the administration and the Legislature.

■■■

Three billionaires paid for the billion-dollar casino or City of Dreams in Manila. Ours would be financed via the sale of stocks by BSI's parent company in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*



Sale of stock is riddled with the unknown or what tomorrow may bring. Pro-casino legislators should be grilled for their thorough review of the issue.

■■■

Some public officials are advocating raising the price of local produce—fish and veggies—to the level of Honolulu. Ever considered improving the disposable income of employees from both sectors before jumping from the kettle into the frying pan? Stagnancy of wages and salaries has been around for over a decade now. See if this could be resolved first and foremost.

■■■

My friend goes to confession everyday. That it seems habitual, the priest bought himself and iPod equipped with headphone. He puts it on while my friend confesses. He moves his head to and fro following the beat. The head movement had my friend convinced he's got the full attention of the priest. A`saina!

■■■

Some have braved calling Cabinet level appointments non-political. Ooops! I see that Obama's semantic somersault on the term "terrorism" has descended into the islands. "Political" is a singular word, not trilateral. Check your dictionary or thesaurus and pay close attention to the definiens—word that defines the term—to secure clarity. Braving loose spouts isn't doing the issue any justice.

It's important to correctly define ISIS threat

How much do words matter in fighting ISIS?

In last week's summit in Washington on "countering violent extremism," critics dumped on President Obama for his refusal to use terms like radical Islam or jihadi terrorists.

The president argues that labeling ISIS or al-Qaeda crimes as "Islamic" would defame 1.5 billion Muslims and confirm the claims of ISIS terrorists that America is at war with the entire Islamic world. In the conference, which focused on how to prevent these groups from inspiring more recruits, the White House went to pains to avoid any term connecting terrorist attacks to Islam.

This ignores the facts.

The president is correct that ISIS and al-Qaeda terrorists represent only a tiny fraction of Muslims, and that proclaiming a war between the West and Islam would play into the story line ISIS is promoting. But refusing to define the problem accurately undercuts any effort to design an effective response.

The global terror threat revolves around al-Qaeda and ISIS, whose ideologies draw on a radical version of Islam that has powerful backers in the Middle East and South Asia.

So there's no use playing word games. You can't counter a radical Islamist ideology without first admitting its religious roots. But, as I discussed in a fascinating conversation with global terrorism expert Clint Watts, a viable strategy to counter ISIS's appeal to disaffected Western youths may have less to do with religion than White House critics admit.

"I think it's fine to call it Islamic extremism, but don't tackle it in terms of religious ideology," says Watts, a former executive officer of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point and a senior fellow at Philadelphia's Foreign Policy Research Institute. "The United States and the Europeans don't have the appropriate message to do that."

As Watts points out, there are two separate issues: how to dampen ISIS's attraction to youths in Muslim countries, and how to undercut the flow of Muslim volunteers from the West. (The issue of how to degrade and defeat ISIS militarily is food for other columns.)

In the Mideast, the appeal of radical Islam has more to do with failed politics than with the Quran. Dictatorships and would-be democracies have failed to deliver prosperity or justice, so Islamic extremists present themselves to disaffected youths as the only alternative.

The nonviolent Muslim Brotherhood movement was elected to power in Egypt but was overthrown in a coup—bolstering the radical claim that parliamentary democracy is useless. The Washington summit, attended by authoritarian regimes like Egypt, didn't touch on such thorny issues.

Nor did it address the trickiest issue of all when it comes to the spread of radical Islam in the region: the role America's allies play.

Saudi Arabia, America's close friend under Republican and Democratic administrations alike, is still financing religious schools throughout the region and the Muslim world that teach the harsh Saudi brand of fundamentalist Islam. This ideology does not condone jihadi violence but still provides the baseline for ISIS thinking. (Saudi Arabia has beheaded nearly 40 people this year, notes Watts, compared with ISIS's two dozen.) Radical preachers from the Arab Gulf still preach this harsh variant of Islam over satellite stations and in Internet chat rooms.

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

"How do you counter Islamic extremism without dealing with its underpinnings, which come from our allies?" Watts asks.

Good question.

Washington should keep pressing Arab allies to block any funding that promotes radical Islam. And it should encourage the emerging debate in the region over distortions of the religion: The burden of discrediting ISIS's grim interpretation of Islam rests mainly with the Muslim world.

In the meantime, says Watts, the West must rethink its campaign to discourage young Muslims in the West from joining extremists in the Middle East.

This problem is far more acute in Europe, where thousands of volunteers have left for Syria, than in the United States, where the number is around 150. But, adds Watts, the strategies promoted at the Washington conference, such as community engagement and the promotion of "moderate" Muslim voices, "are unlikely to keep three guys with guns from killing people in the streets of Paris."

The motivation of today's Western ISIS recruits stems more from social and psychological reasons than religion—"the idea of adventure, a peer group, ego, fighting 'evil Assad' "—and even the appeal of violence to that male age group.

"The religious authority of the 'moderate Muslim voice' will not likely register with the foreign fighter recruit more motivated by the conduct of violence than (by) the Quran," Watts says. Moreover, these days more fighters are recruited via online chat rooms than in the mosques.

Watts recommends a far more nimble Western engagement on social media, where ISIS is a virulent presence. Instead of putting out messages like, "You are wrong about your religion; democratic values are best," says Watts, the West should enlist disillusioned returnee fighters who talk about the criminality and ugly violence ISIS uses against Muslims.

High-quality videos (like ISIS presents) and constant Twitter feeds should be injected into jihadi social-media sites. "We could do it with film students and a credit card and put it into the right conversations," Watts says. "We just have the wrong people." The U.S. counterterrorism communications program, he says, is crippled by bureaucracy and aversion to risk-taking: "There is a fear of a bad tweet, that someone won't like it."

In other words, though ISIS extremism is rooted in radical Islam, combating it requires much more than inserting the word Islamic before terrorism. It requires a strategy far more attuned to realities on the ground.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tobacco smoke kills people

It's about time someone heard us. My nephew's wife, who works in the casino, inhaled tobacco in her work. She lost her baby and she'll never know if this might be the cause of the child's death, but I'm pretty sure it is. My sister-in-law died of a major heart attack in a poker establishment. Her children too might never know if she is a possible victim of secondhand smoking because the doctors here never order an autopsy for secondhand smoking for the cause of death.

Many of the states are already enforcing this law because smoking tobacco kills people. I believe this because I'm a victim of secondhand smoking and there is no public education as to where I can seek help for the damage that has been done to my health by some of these tobacco smokers. They are mean and have an attitude of a second-degree murderer. I need to know where I can seek legal help because I don't have medical insurance and I sure want to sue or have these people pay my hospital bills for damaging my health.

Had DPH done their job to educate the community by posters, media, newspapers, schools and public places, this wouldn't have happened.

Everyone in this community needs to know that tobacco kills people. The Division of Youth Services has neglected to enforce smoke-free air for children whose parents are smoking. In the state of Hawaii, a parent who smokes next to her child can get arrested and put in jail with a $200 fine. An establishment caught allowing it gets an $800 fine, plus they are made to pay for the victim's hospital bills and all others expenses applicable to the damage.

Smokers need to know that tobacco can cause heart attacks, asthma, and many others health damage. You might be responsible for the death of a family member and never know it.

Winnie Atalig
San Jose, Tinian

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.
▲85° ▼75°

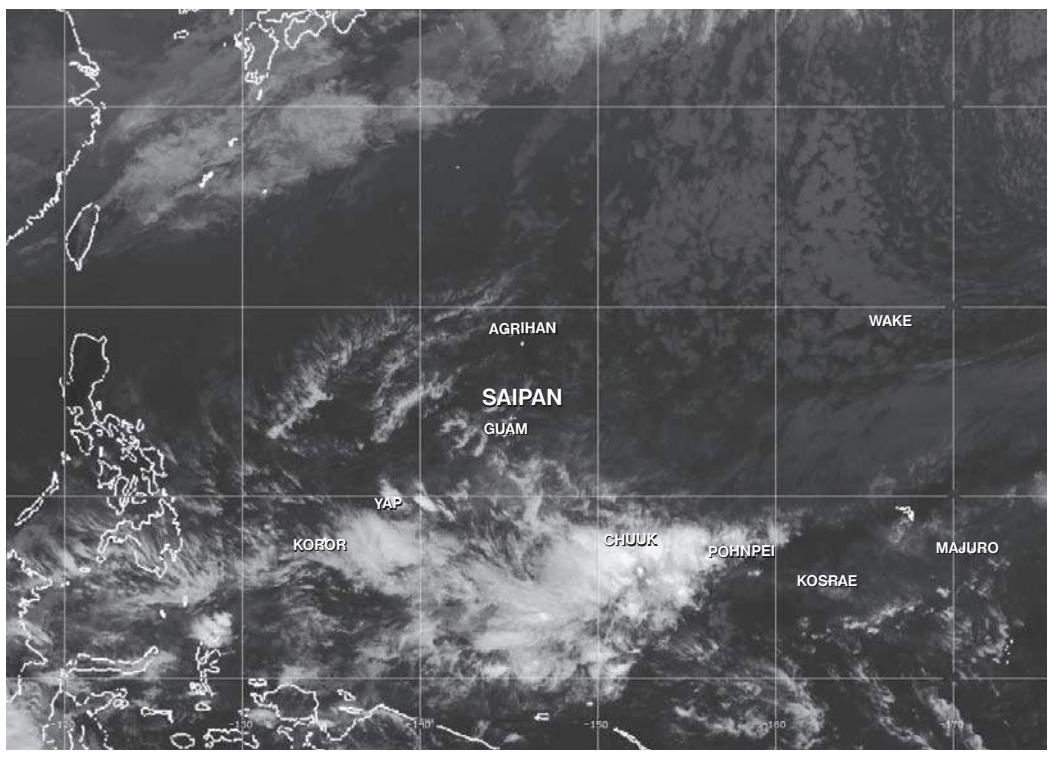
THURSDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.
▲85° ▼75°

FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
▲85° ▼75°

SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
▲85° ▼75°

SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
▲85° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough runs northeastward from 2N135E to about 5N150E then stretches southeastward to end near EQ160E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Yap and east of Koror are between 8N and 4N from 137E to 142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk are between the equator and 8N from 145E to 153E and southeast of Chuuk between 8N and 5N from 153E to 156E. A shear line runs southwestward from the date line at 15N180E to end southwest of Pohnpei at 6N156E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are along and up to 300 miles northwest of the shear line. A trade-wind disturbance northeast of Majuro is causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms east of a line from 12N176E to 10N174E to 6N179E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼75
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼75
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼61
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼21
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲71	▼65
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼70
London	Windy	▲48	▼40
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲74	▼50
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲91	▼70
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼60
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼63
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲26	▼18
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲58	▼47
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲50	▼36
Pusan	Cloudy	▲55	▼41
Rome	Rain	▲58	▼49
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼37
San Francisco	Sunny	▲65	▼49
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲51	▼33
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲52	▼43
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲33	▼25

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:48 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
6:28 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
12:10 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
7:33 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:37 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:37 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:36 AM	6:25 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	6:25 PM
Sunday	6:35 AM	6:25 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:29 AM	
Thursday	12:19 PM	12:32 AM
Friday	1:10 PM	1:25 AM
Saturday	2:00 PM	2:16 AM
Sunday	2:50 PM	3:04 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:10am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ6063	3:20am	7:10am	3, 4, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/275	6:05am	9:35pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:00pm	1:35pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:35am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	2, 3, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Tobacco companies fighting over claims on smoking's effects

WASHINGTON (AP)—America's biggest tobacco companies asked a federal appeals court Monday to set aside a series of court-ordered advertisements saying they lied about the dangers of smoking.

The companies told a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that they're ready and willing to pass along factual public health information about cigarettes, but said they won't go along with being forced to underwrite an ad campaign that would have the companies brand themselves as liars.

The statements imply "that we're still engaged in aspects of wrongdoing ... (and) that we do things that we don't do," Miguel Estrada, an attorney representing the tobacco companies, told the panel.

In 2006, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler ordered the largest cigarette makers to publicly admit that they had lied for decades about the dangers of smoking. The ruling came after testimony from 162 witnesses, a nine-month bench trial and thousands of findings by the judge that defendants engaged in a massive campaign of fraud.

Kessler required the companies to publicly address smoking's adverse health effects, nicotine manipulation and the health impact of secondhand smoke. The judge also required that the companies address the truth about "light" and "low tar" brands and the nature of cigarette addiction.

The companies in the case include Richmond, Virginia-based Altria Group Inc., owner of the biggest U.S. tobacco company, Philip Morris USA; No. 2 cigarette maker, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., owned by Winston-Salem, North Carolina-based Reynolds American Inc.; and No. 3 cigarette maker Lorillard Inc., based in Greensboro, North Carolina.

The preamble to the ads says a "federal court has ruled that Altria, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, Lorillard and Philip Morris USA deliberately deceived the American public."

The companies said the statement is overbroad and misleading. But the government's attorney, Melissa Patterson, told the court that the preamble ensures that the statements that follow are "seen as the real truth," saying the companies have a history of using tactics that raise questions about public health warnings about the dangers of smoking.

The statements the companies are being ordered to publish are based on the fact that the "fraud is likely to continue," added Howard Crystal, an attorney representing public health interveners in the case.

The ads would be in all cigarette packs sold for 12 weeks over the course of two years, in TV spots once per week for a year, in a separate newspaper ad by each company, on company websites indefinitely and at certain retail outlets. They stem from a civil case the government brought in 1999 under RICO, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.

In 2009, the appeals court directed Kessler to craft corrective statements confined to purely factual and uncontroversial information that would reveal previously hidden truths about the tobacco industry's products.

AP
In this May 1, 2008, file photo, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler speaks at the federal courthouse in Washington. Never underestimate the staying power of big tobacco.

Google teams up with 3 wireless carriers to combat Apple Pay

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Aiming to undercut Apple's latest hit service, Google is teaming up with three major U.S. wireless carriers to prod more people into using its mobile wallet.

The counterattack announced Monday is just the latest example of how the competition between Google Inc. and Apple Inc. is extending beyond the technology industry's traditional boundaries. Besides payments, Silicon Valley's two richest companies are expanding into fields such as home appliances and cars to increase their power and profits.

Google's latest volley calls for its payment service to be built into Android smartphones sold by AT&T Inc., Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile USA later this year. Smartphone owners currently have to download the service, called Google Wallet, and install the app on their phone if they want to use it to buy something instead of pulling out cash or a credit card.

Apple's rival service, Apple Pay, already comes embedded in the latest versions of the company's mobile software.

Besides trying to make it more convenient to use Wallet, Google also is hoping to improve the nearly 4-year-old service. Toward that end, Google Inc. is buying some mobile payment technology and patents from Softcard, a 5-year-old venture owned by the wireless carriers. Financial terms weren't disclosed.

Although Google and the wireless carriers got a head start with their digital wallets, the concept hadn't gained much traction until Apple Pay debuted last fall.

The service has become more popular than Apple expected, according to a recent presentation by CEO Tim Cook.

Just three months after Apple Pay's November debut, Cook said the service accounted for two out of every three dollars spent across the three major U.S. card networks, when no card was used. About 2,000 banks and credit unions have agreed to offer Apple Pay to its customers. Apple hasn't said how many merchants are set up to handle its mobile payment services.

If Apple builds on that early momentum, the Cupertino, California, company could become the leader in what is expected to be a booming market. Nearly 16 million U.S. consumers spent about $3.5 billion on tap-and-pay services last year, according to the research firm eMarketer. By 2018, eMarketer predicts those figures will rise to 57 million U.S. consumers spending about $118 billion.

Saving for retirement: Obama proposal sets up Wall St. fight

WASHINGTON (AP)—Tapping the anxieties of aging baby boomers, President Barack Obama on Monday called for tougher standards on brokers who manage retirement savings accounts, a change that could affect the investment advice received by many Americans and aggravate tensions between the White House and Wall Street.

The Labor Department submitted a proposal to the White House Monday that would require the brokers who sell stocks, bonds, annuities and other investments to disclose to their clients any fees or other payments they receive for recommending certain investments.

"If you are working hard, if you are putting away money, if you are sacrificing that new car or that vacation so you can build a nest egg for later, you should have the peace of mind of knowing that the advice you are getting for investing those dollars is sound," Obama said in a speech to the AARP, the retiree advocacy group. "These payments, these inducements incentivize the brokers to make recommendations that generate the best returns for them but not necessarily the best return for you."

The proposed rule, which could be months away from actual implementation, has been the subject of intense behind-the-scenes lobbying, pitting major Wall Street firms and financial industry groups against a coalition of labor, consumer groups and retiree advocates such as the AARP.

Americans increasingly are seeking financial advice to help them navigate an array of options for retirement, college savings and more. Many people provide investment advice, but not all of them are required to disclose potential conflicts of interest.

Under current rules, brokers are required to recommend only "suitable" investments based on the client's finances, age and how much risk is appropriate for him or her. The rules would make brokers handling retirement accounts obligated to put their clients' interests first.

"The challenge we have is right now there are no uniform rules of the road that require retirement advisers to act in the best interests of their clients," Obama said.

Greece readies new list of bailout reforms

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Caught between its own defiant campaign pledges and pressure from creditors, Greece's left-wing government will deliver a list of reforms Tuesday to debt inspectors for final approval of extended rescue loans, officials said.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras was already facing dissent within his left-wing Syriza party over claims it is backtracking on its recent election-winning promises to ease budget cuts for the recession-battered Greeks.

Two officials linked to the government said the list will be sent to Brussels early Tuesday and be reviewed at a teleconference of the 19 eurozone finance ministers later in the day.

They spoke on condition of anonymity either because he wasn't authorized to make comments or because of the sensitivity of the negotiations.

Greece and bailout creditors have been in a standoff since Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras' left-wing Syriza party won general elections last month on a pledge to tear up bailout agreements and seek a massive write off of bailout debts, totaling 240 billion euros ($271 billion).

But they reached a tentative agreement Friday to extend the country's rescue loan program by four months, avoiding the risk of a Greek default and exit from the euro currency.

The government official said reforms would focus on curbing tax evasion, corruption, smuggling and excessive bureaucracy while also addressing poverty caused by a six-year recession.

A Syriza official in Brussels said that "immediate priority" would be given to the settling of overdue debts, the protection of people with mortgage arrears as well as the ending of foreclosures of first residencies.

"Creditors will be skeptical. These are notoriously difficult reforms and, in the case of the latter, usually cost money," said Megan Greene, chief economist at Manulife Asset Management.

"It will be difficult for the Greek government to provide concrete measures for achieving these goals, and they will almost certainly be unable to achieve much before the next round of negotiations in June."

Tsipras is also facing pressure within his party.

Several prominent Syriza members have publicly said the party should honor its campaign promises.

Environment Minister Panagiotis Lafazanis, an outspoken bailout critic, lashed lead bailout lender Germany for insisting that Athens stick with austerity measures—an effort he insisted would fail.

"Red lines in negotiations cannot be crossed—that's why they are red," he told the weekly Real News. "If the Germans choose to push the issue to a rift, they will bring catastrophic consequences on themselves."

Nation

Alaska becomes 3rd state with legal marijuana

By MOLLY DISCHNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—Smoking, growing and possessing marijuana becomes legal in America's wildest state Tuesday, thanks to a voter initiative aimed at clearing away 40 years of conflicting laws and court rulings.

Making Alaska the third state to legalize recreational marijuana was the goal of a coalition including libertarians, rugged individualists and small-government Republicans who prize the privacy rights enshrined in the state's constitution.

But when they voted 52-48 percent last November to legalize marijuana use by adults in private places, they left many of the details to lawmakers and regulators to sort out.

Meanwhile, Alaska Native leaders worry that legalization will bring new temptations to communities already confronting high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence and suicide.

"When they start depending on smoking marijuana, I don't know how far they'd go to get the funds they need to support it, to support themselves," said Edward Nick, council member in Manokotak, a remote village of 400 that is predominantly Yup'ik Eskimo.

Both alcohol and drug use are prohibited in Nick's village 350 miles southwest of Anchorage, even inside the privacy of villagers' homes.

But Nick fears that the initiative, in combination with a 1975 state Supreme Court decision that legalized marijuana use inside homes—could open doors to drug abuse.

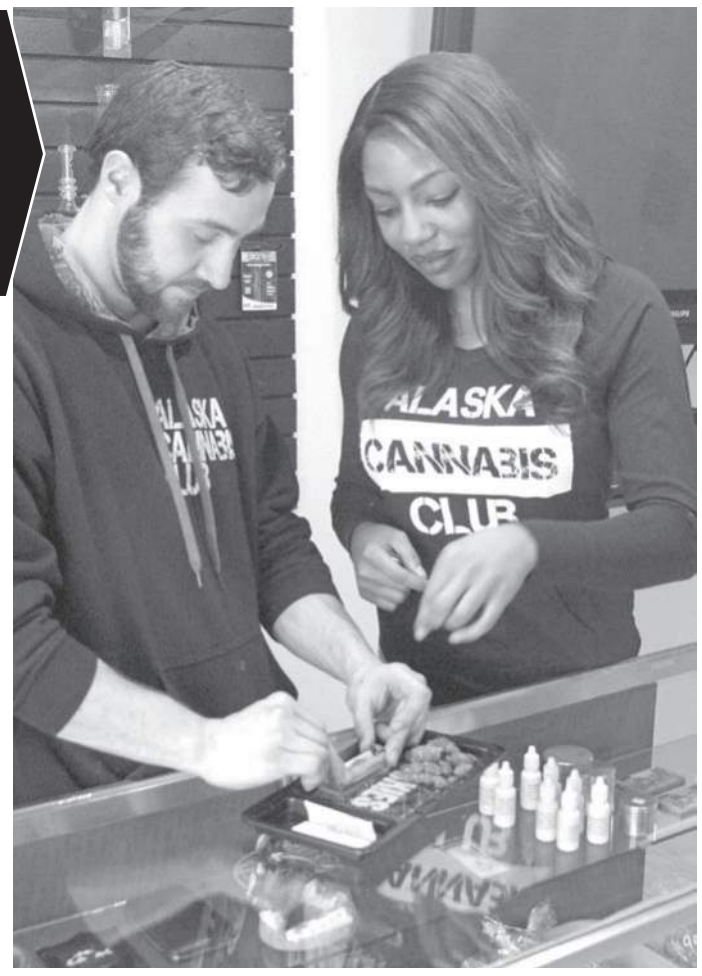
Initiative backers promised Native leaders that communities could still have local control under certain conditions. Alaska law gives every community the option to regulate alcohol locally. From northern Barrow to Klawock, 1,291 miles away in southeast Alaska, 108 communities impose local limits on alcohol, and 33 of them ban it altogether.

But the initiative did not provide clear opt-out language for tribal councils and other smaller communities, forcing each one to figure out how to proceed Tuesday.

November's initiative also bans smoking in public, but didn't define what that means, and lawmakers left the question to the alcohol regulatory board, which planned to meet early Tuesday to discuss an emergency response.

In Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, officials tried and failed in December to ban a new commercial marijuana industry. But Police Chief Mark Mew said his officers will be strictly enforcing the public smoking ban. He even warned people against smoking on their porches if they live next to a park.

Other officials are still discussing a proposed cultivation ban for the wild Kenai Peninsula. But far to the north, in North Pole, smoking outdoors on private property will be OK as long as it doesn't create a nuisance, officials there said.



AP
In this Feb. 20, 2015 photo, Peter Lomonaco, co-founder of the Alaska Cannabis Club, and CEO Charlo Greene roll a joint at their medical marijuana dispensary in Anchorage, Alaska. On Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015, Alaska will become the third state in the nation to legalize marijuana.

While the 1975 court decision protected personal marijuana possession and a 1998 initiative legalized medicinal marijuana, state lawmakers twice criminalized any possession over the years, creating an odd legal limbo.

As of Tuesday, adult Alaskans can not only keep and use pot, they can transport, grow it and give it away. A second phase, creating a regulated and taxed marijuana market, won't start until 2016 at the earliest.

And while possession is no longer a crime under state law, enjoying pot in public can bring a $100 fine.

That's fine with Dean Smith, a pot-smoker in Juneau who has friends in jail for marijuana offenses. "It's going to stop a lot of people getting arrested for nonviolent crimes," he said.

The initiative's backers warned pot enthusiasts to keep their cool.

SIDEBAR

Alaska pot news guide: Marijuana becomes legal in Alaska

By MOLLY DISCHNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—Questions to ponder as Alaska legalizes marijuana:

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
Alaskans voted 52-48 percent in November to legalize marijuana use by adults in non-public places. Possession and transportation of up to an ounce of marijuana, and growing up to six plants, half of which can be mature, is legal as of Feb. 24. The state has nine more months to create regulations for a commercial marijuana industry whose pot will be sold and taxed.

BUT WASN'T POT ALREADY LEGAL IN ALASKA?
Yes and no. A 1975 Alaska Supreme Court decision protected residents with small amounts of pot in their homes from prosecution. But state lawmakers twice criminalized any possession at all.

WHERE CAN I BUY IT?
You can't, legally, and won't be able to, for months to come. Retail sales likely won't begin until May 2016; some lawmakers are pushing for further delays.

BUT HOW CAN I GET IT?
Through a green thumb, or a good friend. The law allows people to keep all the marijuana produced by as many as six plants, and to give it away without state penalty.

WHO MAKES THE RULES?
The Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board is responsible for regulations for now, but with pot already legal to grow, have and use, some lawmakers seemed a bit dazed and confused about next steps.

LOCAL CONTROL
Despite Alaska's constitutionally protected privacy rights, many communities ban alcohol even inside private homes. Some worry the initiative will bring marijuana in where alcohol has been kept out.

WHERE CAN I SMOKE IT?
Not in "public," but what that does that mean? Some state laws define it as schools, parks, prisons, businesses, and in general, anywhere accessible to "the public or a substantial group of persons." But jurisdictions are already disagreeing on the definition when it comes to marijuana.

CAN ALASKANS PACK IT IN?
Marijuana is already legal in Washington state and Colorado, and supporters are taking aim now at California, Arizona, Nevada, Maine and Massachusetts. But getting drugs to Alaska almost always requires federally-regulated transportation or shipment, so that means growing it at home for now.

Kayla Mueller's brother: Swap with Taliban raised IS demands

PRESCOTT, Ariz. (AP)—The brother of an American woman who was killed after spending months as a hostage of Islamic State militants says Kayla Mueller's situation worsened after the government traded five Taliban commanders for a captive U.S. soldier.

The militants increased their demands after the May swap for Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, Eric Mueller told NBC's "Today" in an interview that aired Monday.

"That made the whole situation worse because that's when the demands got greater," he said. "They got larger. They realized that they had something."

Mueller's death was confirmed Feb. 10 by her family and U.S. officials. The Islamic State group claimed she died in a Jordanian airstrike, but U.S. officials have not confirmed that. The Pentagon said it didn't know how she was killed.

The 26-year-old international aid worker, who grew up in Prescott, Arizona, was captured in August 2013 after leaving a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Aleppo, Syria.

Mueller's brother and parents spoke to "Today" host Savannah Guthrie. The family has declined repeated requests for an interview with The Associated Press.

Mueller's father, Carl Mueller, said that the United States' willingness to swap for Bergdahl but not pay ransom or allow ransom to be paid for his daughter "was pretty hard to take."

"I actually asked the president that question when we were in the White House," he said without elaborating.

Mueller's parents said in the interview that the U.S. government put policy ahead of American lives.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Monday that the Mueller family had been put in a difficult position by the U.S. policy against making concessions to terrorists, but he defended it as being in the best interests of the nation.

"The president is confident that his administration did do everything that was possible within the confines of that policy—using our military might, using our intelligence capability, using our diplomatic influence—to try to secure the safe release and return of Kayla Mueller," Earnest said.

A recent Associated Press-GfK poll found that only 3 in 10 Americans think the United States should pay a ransom to save an American hostage overseas, even if it's the only way to rescue the hostage. A quarter of Americans say there are circumstances when the United States should directly negotiate with a terrorist group.

ACROSS THE NATION

Missouri man accused of luring girl with snacks, killing her

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—A man who was released on bond in a burglary case used snacks to lure a 6-year-old girl into his motel room in the southwest Missouri tourist town of Branson and strangled her, court records say. John P. Roberts, 55, of Branson, remained jailed without bond Monday in Taney County after making his first court appearance on a first-degree murder charge in the death of Jasmine Miller. Roberts met with his public defender and was scheduled to appear in court next on March 10, online court records show. They do not identify the public defender. A probable cause statement said the girl's body was found Saturday under the bed in the Windsor Inn room where Roberts was staying alone. Police said in a news release that the discovery was made while officers were searching the area after receiving a lost child report.

Chicago Mayor Emanuel looks to avoid runoff for 2nd term

CHICAGO (AP)—In a city where the voters like tough-talking politicians, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's pugnacious style is being put to the test Tuesday as he tries to win a second term without having to go through a runoff. After raising more than $15 million, or roughly quadruple the combined total of his four rivals, the former White House chief of staff is the clear favorite. But the 55-year-old Emanuel has been campaigning like a first-timer, hoping to get the more than 50 percent necessary to win re-election outright. Otherwise, he will have to face the runner-up in April. Since taking over for longtime Mayor Richard M. Daley four years ago, Emanuel has won praise for bringing about a longer school day, luring companies to the city and taking steps to address the worst-funded pension system of any major U.S. city.

Asia

Former Maldives president dragged into court by police

AP
Maldives former President and current opposition leader Mohamed Nasheed, in white, tussles with policemen who stopped him from speaking to journalists as he is brought to be produced before a court in Male, Maldives, Monday, Feb. 23, 2015.

MALE, Maldives (AP)—Police on Monday dragged the Maldives' former president into a court, which ordered his detention while he is tried over his decision to arrest a top judge three years ago.

Mohamed Nasheed was arrested Sunday and charged under an anti-terrorism law.

He was brought to Criminal Court on Monday for the first hearing, and was dragged into the courtroom after he resisted police attempts to stop him from speaking to journalists gathered outside.

He entered court limping and complained to the judges that he had been manhandled by police. Police told the judges that the fracas occurred because Nasheed tried to stage a sit-in.

The three-judge panel gave Nasheed three days to name his lawyers and ordered him detained until the trial is over. They also asked authorities to give him medical attention.

The Maldives government says the anti-terrorism law covers not only violent terrorism, but a wide array of actions against the state.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations is closely monitoring the situation in the Maldives.

Earlier on Monday, he said, the country's Foreign Minister Dunya Maumoon initiated a call and spoke to Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jens Toyberg-Frandzen "who stressed the need for full respect for due process and transparency of the legal proceedings against former president Nasheed."

Dujarric said Toyberg-Frandzen also appealed to the government of Maldives "to allow for peaceful political dissent and for ways to seek to engage with the opposition, in the interest of long-term political stability in that country."

The top U.S. diplomat for South Asia, Nisha Biswal, voiced concern over the arrest to the Maldivian foreign minister.

"She urged the government to take steps to restore confidence in their commitment to democracy, judicial independence and rule of law," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters in Washington.

Nasheed resigned as president in 2012 following weeks of public protests against his order to arrest top Criminal Court Judge Abdulla Mohamed. Mohamed was arrested after he released a detained opposition politician, and Nasheed's administration accused him of political bias and corruption.

Nasheed became the country's first democratically elected leader in 2008, defeating Maumoon Abdul Gayyoom, who had ruled autocratically for 30 years. However, Nasheed lost to Gayyoom's half-brother, Yameen, in the 2013 presidential election.

Nasheed's detention comes weeks after a key ally defected from Yameen Abdul Gayyoom's ruling coalition to align with Nasheed's opposition Maldivian Democratic Party. The party accuses the government of repeatedly violating the constitution.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Cambodia deports outspoken Spanish environmental activist

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—Cambodia abruptly deported a Spanish environmental activist for overstaying his visa after he refused an order from Prime Minister Hun Sen to leave the country, a government official said Tuesday. Alex Gonzalez-Davidson, who was a tireless anti-dam campaigner in Cambodia, was deported on a Monday night flight, said Gen. Khieu Sopheak, an Interior Ministry spokesman. "His visa had expired and he refused to leave Cambodia as ordered from the ministry, therefore we had no choice but to deport him," he said. Gonzalez-Davidson was a co-founder of non-governmental group called Mother Nature, which has vocally opposed the construction of a controversial hydropower dam in southwestern Cambodia's Koh Kong province. Cambodia has signed a deal to build the mega-dam with China's state-owned Sinohydro.

New Zealand to send troops to Iraq to train local forces

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand will send a small number of troops to Iraq to help train local forces in their battle against the Islamic State group, Prime Minister John Key announced Tuesday. Key told lawmakers the country would deploy up to 143 military personnel, who would be based "behind the wire" and would train Iraqi security forces rather than being actively involved in combat missions. Key and his government made the decision without putting it to a parliamentary vote, a contentious move which some say was prompted because the government didn't have the support it needed to win such a vote. Key said most of the troops would likely be based in the Taji military base north of Baghdad as part of a joint mission with Australia. He said the two-year deployment would begin about May and would be reviewed by the government after nine months.

Afghan official: Peace talks with Taliban in 'near future'

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A senior Afghan leader said on Monday that his country's government will begin peace talks with the Taliban in the "near future."

The statement by Abdullah Abdullah, the chief executive in a government of national unity, came after President Ashraf Ghani declared over the weekend that peace is closer now than at any time since the war began following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Abdullah, whose post is akin to that of a prime minister, spoke to a meeting of Cabinet members on Monday. An official in Abdullah's office who was present at the meeting quoted Abdullah as saying that Pakistani officials had told Taliban leaders to begin peace talks with the Afghan government. The official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss details of a Cabinet meeting.

"Pakistani officials said they have told the Taliban that their only option now is to hold peace talks with the Afghan government, and this is what we have been waiting to hear," the official quoted Abdullah as saying.

"The Afghan government will start peace talks with the Taliban in the near future," Abdullah said, adding that the government would keep the Afghan people informed of any progress in talks with the Taliban "from the beginning to the end of the process."

Brokering a peace deal with the insurgents is a priority for Ghani, who took office in September.

In a statement following Abdullah's comments, the Taliban said that they alone would announce any developments toward talks with Afghan authorities.

"If there are any developments, we will announce it through our official sources to our nation as well as to the world," the Taliban statement said.

Since taking office, Ghani has rolled out a complex strategy aimed at forcing the Taliban leadership to accept that their cause—replacing his government with an Islamist emirate—is hopeless. He has enlisted the support of regional countries believed to protect, fund and arm the Taliban, including Pakistan.

Nepal pledges to improve climbing conditions on Everest

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Nepal is improving its weather forecasting, stepping up security and promising swift rescues if needed during the upcoming climbing season on Everest in an attempt to recover from the worst mountaineering disaster on the world's highest peak last year.

Fees for individual climbers will also be cut to lure back climbers after last year's season was abandoned due to grief and safety concerns following an avalanche near base camp last April that killed 16 local guides.

For the three-month climbing season that begins in March, the government will ensure safer conditions for both international climbers and Nepalese guides and will set up a camp for officials at base camp, the chief of Nepal's Mountaineering Department Puspa Raj Katuwal said Monday.

"We are working on plans to improve the conditions on the mountain this year. We are setting up a full-time office tent at the base camp which will have our officials throughout the climbing season," Katuwal said.

That would allow the officials to quickly respond to any problem on the 8,850-meter (29,035-foot) mountain. They would also provide security, settle disputes among climbers and monitor the activities of the hundreds of climbers and guides at the base camp.

The Nepalese government has been criticized for not having a presence at the base camp and doing too little despite earning millions in permit fees.

The national weather service will provide forecasts for Everest for the officials to release at the base camp. The officials will also monitor the amount of garbage taken by climbers down the mountain. Left-behind garbage has become a problem in recent years.

Katuwal said he was confident that climbers would return to Everest, especially because of the slashed permit fees, which will cost $11,000 per climber this year for permission to climb Everest, down from $25,000.

The moves come after one major expedition company announced that it was ceasing operations on Everest's southern side, which is in Nepal, and shifting to the northern face, in China.

Adrian Ballinger of California-based Alpenglow Expeditions said their decision was based on concerns and fear of the dangers on the treacherous Khumbu Icefall section of the climb, where the avalanche last year hit Sherpa guides who were hauling gear between camps.

"The risk has become truly too great," Ballinger said in a telephone interview.

He said there were too many people on the mountain without climbing experience and that Nepal should have regulations requiring climbers to have high-altitude experience before being issued a climbing permit.

World

Historic US-Iran nuclear deal could be taking shape

GENEVA (AP)—Edging toward a historic compromise, the U.S. and Iran reported progress Monday on a deal that would clamp down on Tehran's nuclear activities for at least 10 years but then slowly ease restrictions on programs that could be used to make atomic arms.

Officials said there were still obstacles to overcome before a March 31 deadline, and any deal will face harsh opposition in both countries. It also would be sure to further strain already-tense U.S. relations with Israel, whose leaders oppose any agreement that doesn't end Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to strongly criticize the deal in an address before Congress next week.

Still, a comprehensive pact could ease 35 years of U.S-Iranian enmity—and seems within reach for the first time in more than a decade of negotiations.

"We made progress," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said as he bade farewell to members of the American delegation at the table with Iran.

AP

Ali Akbar Salehi, head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, left, leaves the hotel following a bilateral meeting with US negotiators, among them U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, for a new round of nuclear talks in Geneva, Switzerland, Monday, Feb. 23, 2015.

More discussions between Iran and the six nations engaging it were set for next Monday, a senior U.S. official said.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the sides found "a better understanding" at the negotiating table.

Western officials familiar with the talks cited movement but also described the discussions as a moving target, meaning changes in any one area would have repercussions for other parts of the negotiation.

The core idea would be to reward Iran for good behavior over the last years of any agreement, gradually lifting constraints on its uranium enrichment and slowly easing economic sanctions.

Iran says it does not want nuclear arms and needs enrichment only for energy, medical and scientific purposes, but the U.S. fears Tehran could re-engineer the program to produce the fissile core of a nuclear weapon.

The U.S. initially sought restrictions lasting up to 20 years; Iran has pushed for less than a decade. The prospective deal appears to be somewhere in the middle.

One variation being discussed would place at least a 10-year regime of strict controls on Iran's uranium enrichment. If Iran complied, the restrictions would be gradually lifted over the final five years.

One issue critics are certain to focus on: Once the deal expired, Iran could theoretically ramp up enrichment to whatever level it wanted.

Experts say Iran already could produce the equivalent of one weapon's worth of enriched uranium with its present operating 10,000 centrifuges. Several officials spoke of 6,500 centrifuges as a potential point of compromise, with the U.S. trying to restrict them to Iran's mainstay IR-1 model instead of more advanced machines.

However, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said last year that his country needed to increase its output equivalent to at least 190,000 of its present-day centrifuges.

Under a possible agreement, Iran also would be forced to ship out most of the enriched uranium it produced or change it to a form that would be difficult to convert for weapons use. It takes about one ton of low-enriched uranium to process into a nuclear weapon, and officials said that Tehran could be restricted to an enriched stockpile of no more than about 700 pounds.

The officials represent different countries among the six world powers negotiating with Iran—the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk publicly about the negotiations.

WORLD BRIEFS

Report: Mossad was less alarmed than Israel premier on Iran

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's Mossad spy agency in October 2012 had a less alarmist view of Iran's nuclear program than an assessment delivered by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the United Nations just a few weeks earlier, according to a purported secret cable published Monday by two media outlets. In a landmark speech to the United Nations in September of that year, Netanyahu had brandished a cartoon drawing of a bomb and said Iran was moving ahead with plans that would allow it to potentially build a nuclear bomb within a year or so. But in the document published Monday by The Guardian and Al-Jazeera, the Mossad is quoted as saying "Iran at this stage is not performing the activity necessary to produce weapons." The news organizations said the document was an assessment shared with South African intelligence, part of a trove of leaked spy cables sent by several different intelligence agencies, including the CIA and Russian intelligence.

Canada: Oil train accident shows new safety rules inadequate

TORONTO (AP)—A fiery oil train derailment in Ontario this month suggests new safety requirements for tank cars carrying flammable liquids are inadequate, Canada's transport safety board announced Monday. The accident was the latest in a spate of fiery derailments in Canada and the U.S., a trend which American safety officials say drives home the need for stronger tank cars, more effective braking systems and other safety improvements. The Canadian Transportation Safety Board said the tank cars involved in the Feb. 14 train derailment met upgraded standards that started to be instituted in Canada last year for new tank cars carrying crude and other flammable liquids. But it said the Class 111, 1232 standard cars still "performed similarly" to those involved in the derailment in Lac-Megantic, Quebec that killed 47 people two years ago. That accident predated the changes.

French president pledges to protect Jewish community

PARIS (AP)—French president Francois Hollande said that the country must offer its protection and affection to the Jewish community as anti-Semitism is on the rise in France. "Jewish are at home in France, it's the anti-Semites who have no place into the Republic", Hollande said in a speech at a prestigious annual dinner of the country's main Jewish organization. Many French Jews feel increasingly worried about anti-Semitism, particularly coming from young Muslims who embrace radical ideology propagated online. France has Europe's largest Jewish population, about half a million. More than 7,000 emigrated to Israel last year.

Girl bomber kills 5 in northeastern Nigerian market

POTISKUM, Nigeria (AP)—A girl as young as 10 blew herself up in a busy market in northeastern Nigeria, killing herself and four others, and fueling fears Islamic extremists are using kidnapped girls as suicide bombers.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack Sunday, which also seriously wounded 46 people, but it bore the hallmarks of Nigeria's homegrown extremist group, Boko Haram.

The girl, who appeared to be no more than 10 years old, got out of a tricycle taxi in front of the busy cell phone market in Potiskum and minutes later her explosives detonated, according to Anazumi Saleh, a survivor of the attack who suffered head injuries.

Authorities were not immediately able to confirm the girl's identity or her precise age from her remains.

In recent months, Boko Haram has begun using teenage girls and young women for suicide bombings in marketplaces, bus stations and other busy areas, but the girl in Sunday's attack appeared far younger. It is not clear whether the girls and women have set off the explosions themselves, or whether the detonations were controlled remotely.

Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

Boko Haram, whose name means "Western education is sinful" in the local Hausa language, attracted international condemnation when its fighters kidnapped 276 mostly Christian schoolgirls from a boarding school in the northeastern town of Chibok in April. Dozens escaped but 219 remain missing. Boko Haram has said the girls have converted to Islam and been married off to extremist fighters.

Boko Haram's violent campaign in Nigeria killed at least 10,000 people last year, according to the Council on Foreign Affairs. At least 1.6 million people have been driven from their homes in the group's brutal five-year uprising to create an Islamic state in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation of 160 million people divided between mainly Muslims in the north and Christians in the south.

Potiskum, the capital of Yobe state, has been the target of repeated attacks. In November, a suicide bomber disguised in a school uniform set off explosives hidden in a backpack during an assembly at a high school, killing at least 48 students and wounding 79 others.

Meanwhile, Boko Haram denied a Ministry of Defense statement that Nigeria's military had retaken the border garrison town of Baga.

Ukraine delays heavy weapons pullback, blames rebel attacks

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukraine delayed a promised pullback of heavy weapons from the front line Monday, blaming continuing attacks from separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Under a peace agreement reached Feb. 12, both sides are to withdraw their heavy weapons 25 to 70 kilometers (16 to 44 miles) back to create a buffer zone. Ukrainian officials said Sunday they were planning to start.

However, military spokesman Lt. Col. Anatoliy Stelmakh told reporters on Monday the pullback will not begin until rebel attacks stop entirely, in line with a cease-fire that was supposed to begin Feb. 15.

Stelmakh said there were two rebel artillery attacks overnight and although this is significantly fewer than in previous days, "as long as firing on Ukrainian military positions continues, it's not possible to talk about a pullback."

Col. Valentyn Fedichev, deputy commander of the military operation against the rebels, said there had been 27 attacks against Ukrainian forces over the past 24 hours, which he said was lower than in recent days. He also indicated that no pullback was imminent.

"If the enemies continue to use their own heavy weapons, it is clear that Ukraine will continue to counteract these operations," he said.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's observer mission in Ukraine is supposed to be monitoring the weapons withdrawal. Its spokesman, Michael Bocuirkiw, told the AP on Monday the monitors had seen heavy weapons movements by both sides but could not tell whether weapons were being pulled back or just being redeployed.

Under the peace agreement that was worked out after all-night talks between Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France on Feb. 12, the weapons pullback is to commence when shooting ends and be completed within two weeks.

An Associated Press reporter on Monday saw Ukrainian forces moving back from around the town of Debaltseve, which was captured last week by rebel forces after a fierce weekslong siege.

Both Stelmakh and Fedichev said rebels are still trying to overrun a Ukrainian government position in the village of Shyrokyne, on the outskirts of the strategic port city of Mariupol.

Focus

Lawmaker with lavish decor billed private planes, concerts

By JACK GILLUM and STEPHEN BRAUN
Associated Press

AP
In this Feb. 6, 2015 file photo, Rep. Aaron Schock, R-Ill., speaks to reporters in Peoria, Ill. Schock spent taxpayer and campaign funds on private airplanes to fly him around the country on aircraft owned by some of his key donors, The Associated Press has found.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Illinois Rep. Aaron Schock, a rising Republican star already facing an ethics inquiry, has spent taxpayer and campaign funds on flights aboard private planes owned by some of his key donors, The Associated Press has found. There also have been other expensive travel and entertainment charges, including for a massage company and music concerts.

The expenses highlight the relationships that lawmakers sometimes have with donors who fund their political ambitions, an unwelcome message for a congressman billed as a fresh face of the GOP. The AP identified at least one dozen flights worth more than $40,000 on donors' planes since mid-2011.

The AP tracked Schock's reliance on the aircraft partly through the congressman's penchant for uploading pictures and videos of himself to his Instagram account. The AP extracted location data associated with each image then correlated it with flight records showing airport stopovers and expenses later billed for air travel against Schock's office and campaign records.

Asked for comment, Schock responded in an email on Monday that he travels frequently throughout his Peoria-area district "to stay connected with my constituents" and also travels to raise money for his campaign committee and congressional colleagues.

He said he takes compliance with congressional funding rules seriously and has begun a review of his office's procedures "concerning this issue and others to determine whether they can be improved." The AP had been seeking comment from Schock's office since mid-February to explain some of his expenses.

Donors who owned planes on which travel was paid for by Schock's House and political accounts did not immediately respond to requests seeking comment Monday.

Schock's high-flying lifestyle, combined with questions about expenses decorating his office after the TV show "Downton Abbey," add to awkward perceptions on top of allegations he illegally solicited donations in 2012.

The Office of Congressional Ethics said in a 2013 report that there was reason to believe Schock violated House rules by soliciting campaign contributions for a committee that backed Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., in a 2012 primary. The House Ethics Committee has said that query remains open.

"Haters are gonna hate," Schock, 33, told ABC News after the "Downton Abbey" story broke in *The Washington Post*, brushing off the controversy by invoking a line from one of pop singer Taylor Swift's songs.

Lawmakers can use office funds for private flights as long as payments cover their share of the costs. But most of the flights Schock covered with office funds occurred before the House changed its rules in January 2013. The earlier rules prohibited lawmakers from using those accounts to pay for flights on private aircraft, allowing payments only for federally licensed charter and commercial flights.

Schock's House account paid more than $24,000 directly to a Peoria aviation firm for eight flights provided by one of Schock's donor's planes in 2011 and 2012. While the aircraft flies as part of an Illinois charter service, the owner of the service told the AP on Monday that any payments made directly to the donor's aviation company would not have been for charter flights.

Beyond air travel, Schock spent thousands more on tickets for concerts, car mileage reimbursements—among the highest in Congress—and took his interns to a sold-out Katy Perry concert in Washington last June.

The donor planes include an Italian-made Piaggio twin-engine turboprop owned by Todd Green of Springfield, Illinois, who runs car dealerships in Schock's district with his brother, Jeff. Todd Green told a Springfield newspaper that Jeff—a pilot and campaign contributor—and Schock have been friends for a long time.

The AP found that Green's plane traveled to at least eight cities last October in the Midwest and East Coast, cities where Schock met with political candidates ahead of the midterm elections. His Instagram account's location data and information from the service FlightAware even pinpointed Schock's location on a stretch of road near one airport before Green's plane departed.

Campaign records show a $12,560 expense later that month to Jeff Green from a political action committee associated with Schock, called the "GOP Generation Y Fund." That same month, the PAC paid $1,440 to a massage parlor for a fundraising event.

In November 2013, Schock cast votes in the Capitol just after Green's plane landed at nearby Reagan National Airport. Shortly after Green's return to Peoria, Schock posted a photo from his "Schocktoberfest" fundraising event at a brewery in his district. Schock billed his office account $11,433 for commercial transportation during that same, four-day period to a Peoria flight company, Byerly Aviation.

The AP's review covered Schock's travel and entertainment expenses in his taxpayer-funded House account, in his campaign committee and the GOP Generation Y Fund. Records show more than $1.5 million in contributions to the Generation Y Fund since he took office in 2009.

Schock used House office expenses to pay more than $24,000 for eight flights between May 2011 and December 2012 on a six-passenger Cessna Golden Eagle owned by D&B Jet Inc., run by Peoria agribusiness consultant and major Schock donor Darren Frye. While D&B is a private corporate aviation firm, it also flies with Jet Air Inc., an Illinois-based aviation firm licensed by the FAA for charter service.

Records show Schock used House funds to directly pay D&B instead of Jet Air for the eight flights. Under the old rules that previously allowed House funds to pay only for charter or commercial aircraft, Schock's office would likely not have been authorized to pay for private flights unless the House Ethics Committee approved it.

Harrel W. Timmons, Jet Air's owner, said in a telephone interview that any charter flights D&B flies through his firm are paid directly to Jet Air. "They've got their own corporate jet and pilot," he said.

House records also show that, since 2013, Schock has flown four times on a Cessna owned by Peoria auto dealer Michael J. Miller and businessman Matthew Vonachen, who heads a janitorial firm, Vonachen Services Inc. Schock's House office account paid nearly $6,000 total for the four flights, according to federal data published online by the nonprofit Sunlight Foundation.

Under current House rules, the payments for the private flights would be authorized if they paid for Schock's portion of each flight. It is not clear from records how many other passengers flew on the same flights. USA Today on Friday first reported potential issues with House ethics rules in revealing some of the flights.

Vonachen and his family donated at least $27,000 to Schock's campaigns, while Miller contributed $10,000 to the Automotive Free International Trade PAC. Schock has supported recent free trade agreements with South Korea and with several other countries, which the Automotive PAC—a Schock contributor—lauded.

Schock's reliance on donor-owned planes and on his government allowance to pay for the flights mirrors the use by Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., of a private jet owned by a wealthy eye doctor and major donor. Prompted by an ethics investigation, Menendez reimbursed donor Salomon Melgen $58,500 for two flights.

GOP Generation Y paid more than $24,000 for tickets and festivals, including $13,000 to country music events, $4,700 in expenses to Chicago ticket broker SitClose.com, and $3,000 for a "fundraising event" to an organization that runs the Global Citizen Festival in New York.

"You can't say no when your boss invites you. Danced my butt off," one former intern posted on his Instagram account with a picture of Perry at her June 2014 show. PAC records show a $1,928 expense for the ticket service StubHub.com two months later, listing it only as a "PAC fundraising event."

Records show Schock also requested more than $18,000 in mileage reimbursements since 2013, among the highest in Congress. His office has previously said it was reviewing those expenses.

Good Housekeeping

Is your electrician qualified?

By PAUL F.P. POGUE
Angie's List

As the nation's economy continues to improve and homeowners tackle more improvement projects, leaders in the electrical industry say a shortage of qualified electricians makes it even more important for homeowners to hire smartly.

"The No. 1 challenge contractors are facing is not the amount of work ... it's a manpower issue," says Thayer Long, CEO of the Independent Electrical Contractors, a national trade association representing 3,000 member companies. "Nationwide, there is a growing shortage of electricians in this country—trained electricians."

With homes becoming smarter with new technology and the growing popularity of LED lighting, Long says it's vital for homeowners to make sure the electrician they hire is properly trained to do the job and holds required trade licensing. But even though the company may be licensed and employ a master electrician, that doesn't mean the person doing an electrical job in your home meets those same standards.

In about half of all states, he says, individuals performing the work are not required to be licensed electricians; even though the company must at least have a licensed electrician on staff who is expected to provide oversight. "That's why asking about training is really important," Long says. "You could be in a state that doesn't have (individual) licensing (requirements), and the guy you're working with learned it on the fly, and you're really playing with fire."

Licensing regulations vary from state to state and county to county, so homeowners should first learn their local jurisdiction's requirements before hiring an electrician. Then, follow up with the company to understand exactly who will be working on your home and their qualifications. Many counties require a licensed electrician to pull a permit before beginning any work or completing inspections. A reputable company also will require staff to attend regular training courses and stay current on the National Electrical Code, which is amended every three years.

Kent Crook, owner of highly rated Wiremasters Electric in Miami, says he works in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, where electrical contractors can send unlicensed workers on jobs provided they have oversight from a licensee.

"In our state, you don't have to have a licensed electrician on every job," he says. "You just have to have a licensed electrician overseeing the job ... to make sure things are done properly and up to code." He adds that a license holder remains responsible for the work done by employees and is required to make sure they only do work they're qualified to handle.

In Minnesota, unlicensed workers need to be directly overseen by a licensed electrician, says Randy Smith, owner of highly rated Randy's Electric in Maple Grove, Minn.

"You need to have a journeyman's license to be on a job by yourself," Smith says. "Sometimes we send apprentice helpers along who are learning and sometimes we don't, but we always send a licensed electrician out to the house."

Crook says responsible electrical contractors take steps to ensure that qualified individuals work on appropriate jobs. "If you're hanging a fan or fixture, you don't really need a guy who has a license for that," he says. "But if we're doing a panel change, I feel like we need a licensed guy. We know that what we do isn't a game. If an electrician messes up, a house might burn down. It's serious."

Before hiring an electrician, verify the company's trade license and staff training. STEVE C. MITCHELL/TNS

COMFORT FOOD

Spinach and Feta Pie

By HEALTHY EXCHANGES
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

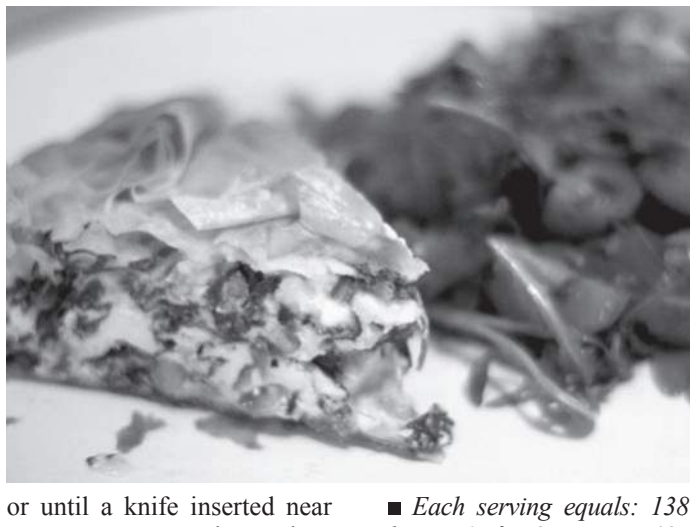
There is something magical about the combination of spinach and feta cheese—it's like traveling to Greece. When you combine them in this ultra-quick main dish, it's even more magical.

1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and thoroughly drained
3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
1/4 cup chopped green onion
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon reduced-fat biscuit baking mix
2/3 cup fat-free milk
1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
2 eggs or equivalent in egg substitute

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Spray a 9-inch pie plate with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine spinach, feta cheese and green onion. Evenly arrange mixture in prepared pie plate. In same bowl, combine baking mix, milk, lemon pepper and eggs. Mix well to combine. Pour mixture evenly over spinach mixture.

3. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean. Place pie plate on a wire rack and let set for 5 minutes. Makes 6 servings.



■ *Each serving equals: 138 calories, 6g fat, 9g protein, 12g carb., 449mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Meat, 1/2 Vegetable, 1/2 Starch.*

THIS IS A HAMMER

Clogged sink? Try clearing P-trap

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
(C) 2015 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: I read your article on slow-draining sinks and fixing or cleaning the pop-up stopper. My bathroom sink isn't draining fast at all. I checked the stopper but it's clear. What else can I do?—Jae C., via email

A: In your case there may be a clog further down the line, at or near the P-trap. This is the big bend in the pipe just below the sink. (It looks like a big J or a sideways P, hence the name).

Clogs made up of soapy gunk and hair often collect at the bottom of this bend. It happens so frequently that many P-traps today have a big plug at the bottom to access and clean the area.

To clear it, you'll need an adjustable/locking wrench or pipe wrench, a bucket, a plumbing snake (also known as a hand auger) and some rags. Place the bucket directly under the trap.

If you have a cleanout plug, wrap a rag around it and use the adjustable wrench to loosen it, then unscrew by hand. Water will gush out into the bucket, so be prepared. Clean the P-trap using a small bottle-brush or a modified wire hanger to reach in and grab the clog, or feed the pipe snake in a couple inches at a time and whirl it around to catch and pull out clogs further in.

If you don't have a cleanout plug, the trap itself can be removed by loosening the attachment nuts on either end of the curved pipe by hand. If they're really tight, wrap a rag around each nut before using a pipe wrench or locking wrench, so you don't scratch or strip the nuts. Loosen and then unscrew by hand, easing the trap downward until it comes off. (This video by HowTo with GEO shows how to do it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3USfrjDcLhY)

Clean the trap itself, and inspect the tailpipe that leads upward to the sink for clogs, as well as the pipe feeding into the wall. Fish out any clogs you can see.

Now slide the trap back into place and hand-tighten the nuts. Don't overtighten. To test the seal, run water down the drain and slowly tighten until any leakage stops. If it still leaks, replace the seals located at each nut.

TIP: If your sink and tub drains clog frequently with hair, buy some inexpensive mesh drain traps and clean them daily to minimize the problem.

Send your home tips and questions to ask@thisisahammer.com.

Life & Style

After the Oscars, diversity remains a topic of discussion

NEW YORK (AP)—What was missing from the Academy Awards turned out to be the issue that could not be ignored on the night trophies were handed out.

The lack of non-white contenders for major acting awards this year became a focus on the day Oscar nominations were announced. Hollywood's commitment to reflecting the nation's diversity, and its sensitivity to how these issues are perceived, could not be missed on Sunday's show—from the opening joke on.

BEST AND WHITEST

Host Neil Patrick Harris put it right on the table. "Tonight, we honor Hollywood's best and whitest—excuse me, brightest," he said.

It drew a knowing laugh, and no small amount of parsing.

Was Harris tweaking Hollywood for an embarrassing shortcoming? Or was he making fun of the people who have raised it as an issue of concern?

Obviously, the Oscars are an entertainment program and hosts are expected to make jokes, said Eric Haywood, a writer on Fox's hit drama "Empire." Yet jokes can also make people feel that their concerns are not being taken seriously, he said.

"As it stands, the joke is likely to be reduced to a meme, which the Academy is in no way obligated to address and can easily dismiss," said Robert Jones, a Brooklyn writer and creator of the social justice blog, Son of Baldwin. "It is, after all, just a joke, right?"

"SELMA" STAR

Another knowing line from Harris came when he praised actor David Oyelowo, who played Martin Luther King Jr. in the movie "Selma" but was passed over for an acting nomination. Harris asked Oyelowo to stand and the audience applauded.

"Oh, sure," Harris said. "Now you like him."

Oyelowo was arguably involved in the emotional high point of the show. The movie's anthem, "Glory," by Common and John Legend, won the Oscar for best song shortly after the two musicians performed it. A camera cut to Oyelowo as the song was being sung and his face was stained with tears.

BOYCOTT

Haywood saw references to Oscar moments on Twitter Sunday night but had no personal knowledge of them. He wasn't watching. Being in the entertainment business, he usually tunes in. This year, he participated in a boycott of the Oscars ceremony by some black viewers that was organized through the Twitter hashtag (hash)OscarsSoWhite.

That hashtag appears to have been started by a friend of Haywood's, Washington lawyer April Reign, according to Twitter, and was the gathering place for a steady stream of commentary on Hollywood's lack of diversity.

There have been some 140,000 mentions of the hashtag since the day nominations were announced, according to Topsy. The number of mentions peaked that day and the hashtag became popular again Sunday night.

The Sunday night audience of 36.6 million people was down 16 percent from the 43.7 million viewers who watched in 2014, the Nielsen company said. Nielsen had no immediate breakdown of Oscar viewership by ethnicity.

Haywood said he was glad the issue was brought to the fore.

"Change comes very slowly," he said. "I don't expect any sort of radical change to the status quo from one year to the next. My hopes are not too high for anything to happen too quickly. By the same token, it doesn't hurt for people to raise their voices."

NON-NOMINATED MINORITIES

To some viewers, the Academy Awards made it a specific point to emphasize diversity during the show, from Harris noting Oyelowo in the audience to making Oprah Winfrey a joke target.

Nowhere was the effort more evident than in the awards presenters, who included Terrence Howard, Kerry Washington, Viola Davis, Winfrey, Oyelowo, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Idris Elba, Kevin Hart, Eddie Murphy, Lupita Nyong'o, Zoe Saldana and Octavia Spencer.

ARQUETTE BACKLASH

Meryl Streep stood and cheered when Patricia Arquette, in her acceptance speech for best supporting actress award, made a ringing declaration in favor of equal rights and pay for women.

Her elaboration backstage, however, struck some who heard about it as pitting groups against each other.

"It's time for all the women in America and all the men that love women, and all the gay people, and all the people of color that we've fought for to fight for us now," Arquette said backstage, leading some critics to wonder if her call for wage equality was for white women only.

LOCK BOX

Harris' assignment of actress Octavia Spencer to watch the "lock box" of his Oscars prediction struck some people online as demeaning: Even as a joke, assigning a black woman to the task, supervised by two white actors, may have been tone deaf. A spokeswoman for Spencer did not immediately return a request for comment on Monday.

PENN AND INARRITU

The line, coming from one of Hollywood's most prominent liberals, seemed shocking.

"Who gave this son of a bitch his green card," actor Sean Penn said, announcing the win for "Birdman" as best picture, directed by Mexican-born Alejandro Inarritu.

A slur? No, Inarritu said backstage that he and Penn are friends and the reference to the document that confers residency status to immigrants was an example of the rough sense of humor they share. "I found it hilarious," he said.

All's good, said Penn's publicist, Mara Buxbaum, on Monday.

"As Inarritu said, they are indeed great friends," she said. "Sean Penn is currently in Haiti with President Clinton. He is not available for an interview."

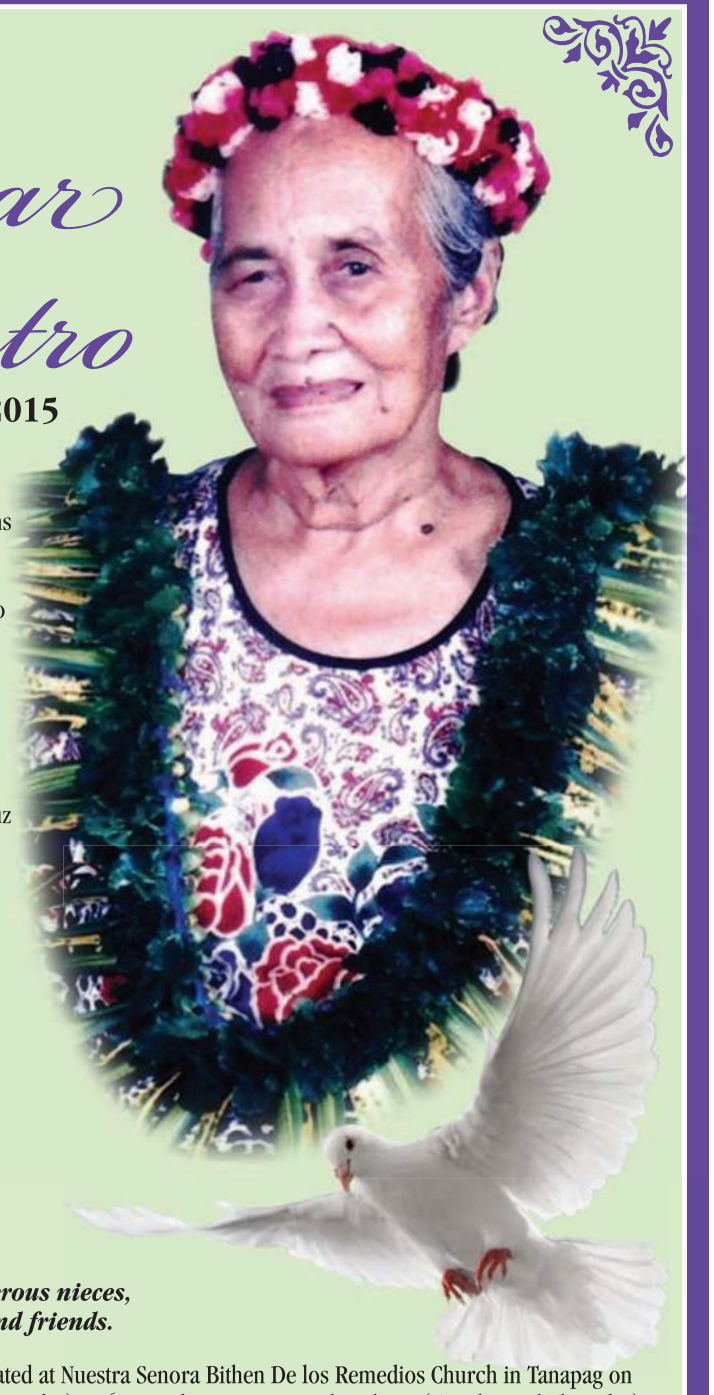
AP

Common, left, and John Legend pose in the press room with the award for best original song in a feature film for "Glory" from "Selma" at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

In Loving Memory of

† Rosa Omar Tanin Castro

Born: Feb 17, 1931 • Died: Feb 18, 2015

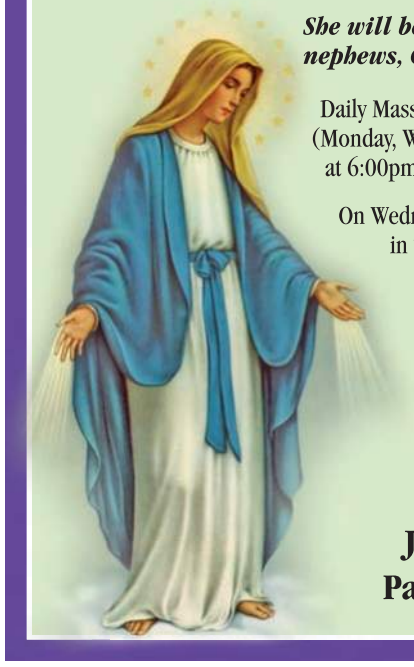


In Her New Life, She Now Joins Her:

Husband: †Francisco Manibusan Castro, †Adalbert Mendiola Semens
Mother: †Josepha Omar Tanin
Siblings: †Florencia Omar Sarapau (†Margarita Omar Sarapau)
†Rosario Omar Camacho (†Simeon Omar Camacho, †Antonio Omar Camacho, †Magdelena Omar Camacho, †Francisco Omar Camacho)
†Juliana Omar Tanin
†Ignacia Teigita Cangco
†Joaquin Kani Teigita
Children: †Marcelino Tanin, †Cecilia Tanin Semens
Cousins: †Felipe Iguel Ruak, †Blandina Iguel Tenorio, †Trinidad Cruz Angui, †Maria Cruz Laniyo, †Benedicto "Finet" Iguel Falig, †Felicidad Misa Kaainoa

Her memories will forever live In the Hearts of Her:

Children: Josepha (Akijosh), Marcelina and Marciano Tito (Katherine & John, Max, Florencita, Menas, Joaquin, Elizabeth) Regina and †Kintino Elyeisar (Elfleda & Jesse, Jacqueline & Hubert, Cassandra, Michael, Margarett, Therese,) Patrick & Nadine (Bella)
Great Grandchildren: Antonia Rosalina, Alexandria Abbygail, Chelsea Jessel, Jesse John Jr , Reneissia Yovalin, Hazell Rosa
Children at Heart: Mariano K. Camacho, Geraldine Ann Misa, †Consolacion M. Guiao †Isidro Misa, William S. Lifoifoi, Pete P. Reyes Nobert T. Rios, Stalin R. Iderbai, PJ R. Yaroitemal ,
Nieces/Nephew: Jose Omar, & Maria Seman Camacho



She will be greatly missed by numerous nieces, nephews, God Children, relatives and friends.

Daily Mass Of Intentions is being celebrated at Nuestra Senora Bithen De los Remedios Church in Tanapag on (Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, & Sunday) at 6pm and at San Roque Church on (Tuesday and Thursday) at 6:00pm, Holy Rosary is being said at 7:00pm at Nuestra Senora Bithen De los Remedios Church, Tanapag.

On Wednesday February 25th, at 3pm her remains will be escorted from the CHC Chapel to her residence in Tanapag for wake services. Responso will be at 7:00pm followed by Holy Rosary at 7:30pm.
On Thursday February 26th at 8:30am her remains will be escorted from her residence to Nuestra Senora De los Remedios Church, Tanapag for public viewing.
Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11am and Interment Services will take place at Tanapag Public Cemetery where she will be at a peaceful rest.

Please join us in prayer.

Ghilisow, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Thank You

Josepha, Marcelina & Marciano, Regina & †Kintino, Patrick & Nadine, Children, Grandchildren and Family

Mexicans rejoice at Inarritu's Oscar victories

MEXICO CITY (AP)— Mexicans rejoiced at the Oscar victories of native son Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu on Monday, and embraced remarks he made that were widely seen as a criticism of their government.

Inarritu responded to his best picture award for "Birdman" by expressing hope Mexico "can find and build the government that we deserve." National pride over the director's victory was so great that even the country's ruling party sent congratulations, despite the seeming swipe.

There was more uncertainty over actor Sean Penn's quip as he announced the award, asking "Who gave this son of a bitch his green card?"

Inarritu said it was a joke between longtime friends, and many Mexicans took it that way. Some, however, said they found it offensive.

The Mexican director's comment about the government was interpreted as criticism of President Enrique Pena Nieto's administration, which critics have targeted for its handling of the case of 43 missing college students, as well as alleged conflicts of interest.

On Monday morning, the top Twitter trend in Mexico was the hashtag: #ElGobiernoQueMerecemos, or TheGovernmentWeDeserve.

Pena Nieto sent a congratulatory note to Inarritu on Sunday evening through his official Twitter account. But his government did not immediately respond to a request from The Associated Press on Monday for comment on the director's remarks.

The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party said through its Twitter account: "Sharing the Mexican pride, it's a fact that more than deserving it, we are building a better government. Congratulations #GonzalezInarritu."

For some analysts, the director's comment is a vision many share.

"The majority of Mexicans are not satisfied with the kind of government that we have," Sergio Aguayo, analyst and academic at the Colegio de Mexico, said Monday on MVS Radio.

Analyst Denise Dresser, speaking on the same radio show, shared the sentiment. "I agree with (Inarritu): we don't have the government that we deserve."

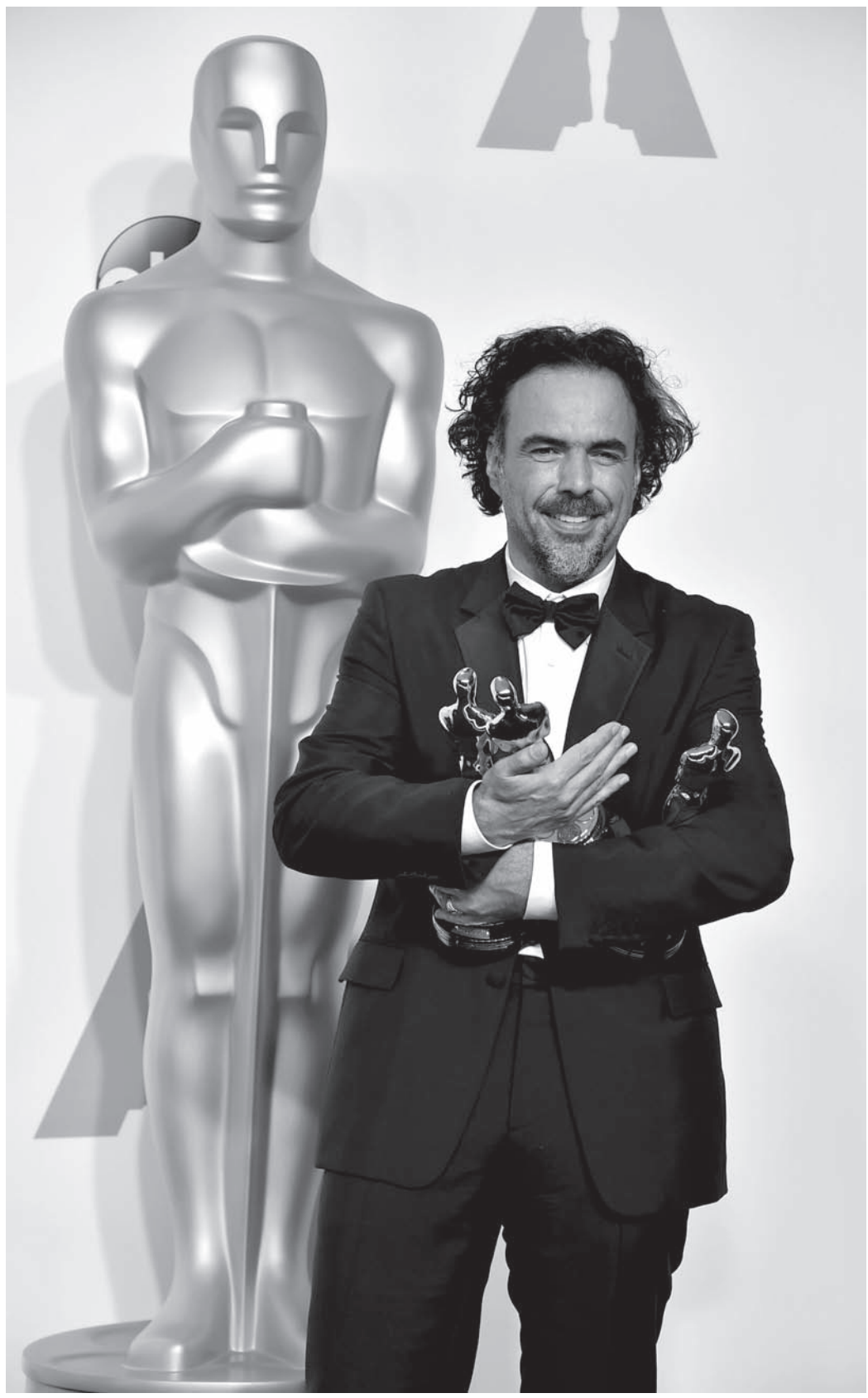
Inarritu is not the first Oscar-winning Mexican director to win and make critical comments about the government.

Alfonso Cuaron, who won the best director award last year for his film "Gravity," published a letter in Mexican newspapers questioning the energy sector reforms undertaken by Pena Nieto. The reforms, which eventually passed, opened up Mexico's state-run oil sector to foreign companies for the first time in more than 70 years.

Some Mexicans had more to say about Penn's joke than Inarritu's acceptance speech.

"It seemed to me like a joke to try to ingratiate himself through humor and mischief with those (in the United States)," said Carlos Farfan, a 27-year-old waiter in Mexico City, who had seen the show. "It isn't rude. It's between friends."

But Oswaldo Andrade, a 45-year-old accountant, who did not see it, viewed the comment differently. "It seems offensive. Where is the speech against discrimination? You have to separate friendship from a public moment at a global level."



AP

Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu poses in the press room with his awards for best picture and best director for "Birdman" at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Poland's politicians, filmmakers hail Oscar for 'Ida'

WARSAW, Poland (AP)— Poland's politicians and filmmakers rejoiced Monday over the nation's first ever foreign language movie Oscar for "Ida," seeing it as a sign of the country's cinematography coming of age.

President Bronislaw Komorowski said the award was a "source of satisfaction for all Poles" and proof that democratic Poland is becoming an increasingly attractive country, with "valuable things to offer to the world."

It was the first foreign language Oscar for Poland despite nine previous nominations and a rich history of filmmaking, including by renowned directors like Andrzej Wajda who received an honorary Oscar in 2000, and Roman Polanski, who won an Oscar in 2003 for directing "The Pianist."

"This is a beautiful day for me. It shows that after many difficult years Poland's cinematography is back on its feet. I wanted to live to see this day," the 88-year-old Wajda said.

Polish-British director Pawel Pawlikowski made "Ida" in black and white, using imagery of the 1960s. It plunges into World War II and the early years of communism, two dark chapters of Poland's history, via a young Catholic nun who discovers she is Jewish. It was one of the critical hits of 2014 in Europe and the U.S. Being so well known helped the movie win the Oscar, Polish critics said.

Polish 1993 Oscar-winning production designer Allan Starski said the country's filmmakers always aspired to the top ranks of world cinema.

"We were often very close, but we never won an Oscar (for a foreign movie.) This time we have an Oscar. This is a huge success," Starski said.

After years of a downturn following political and economic change, Polish cinema is getting momentum, also thanks to funding from the state Polish Film Institute, which helped finance "Ida."

The head of the Polish Filmmakers Association, Jacek Bromski, said the movie is "outstanding" and objective, which gave it universal appeal.

Speaking backstage, Pawlikowski said he believes the award will encourage other Polish directors to be original and bold.

AP

Pawel Pawlikowski poses in the press room with the award for best foreign language film for "Ida" at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles

Nielsen: Oscars viewership down 16 percent

NEW YORK (AP)—Oscar viewership was down 16 percent from last year and reached its lowest point since 2009, with 36.6 million people watching the Neil Patrick Harris-hosted awards show on ABC Sunday night.

The Nielsen company's preliminary estimate of U.S. viewership was down from the 43.7 million people who watched last year, a feel-good show where host Ellen DeGeneres attracted attention for posting a "selfie" with various movie stars and having pizzas delivered to the audience.

Last year's show, which also had the star power of "Frozen," Matthew McConaughey and U2, reached the biggest audience for any Academy Awards show since 2000.

The Oscars tend to be the most-watched entertainment program of the year on television, often second only to the Super Bowl. But viewership can be affected by the relative popularity of the movies up for big awards, and best picture winner "Birdman" wasn't a particularly big box office draw. "American Sniper" was the most popular movie, but received one relatively minor award.

There was also a movement among black viewers to boycott the awards show because all of the major acting nominees were white. There's no way to immediately tell whether this had an impact on the decrease in viewers since Nielsen did not have an immediate breakdown of ethnic viewership.

This year's Oscars audience was the lowest since 36.3 million watched in 2009, when "Slumdog Millionaire" won best picture.

After a couple of years where awards show ratings in general were going up—a reflection of the desire among viewers for live programming—they appear to have flattened.

Nielsen also said there were 5.9 million messages about the Academy Awards sent out through Twitter in the U.S. That's roughly half the 11.2 million tweets sent out last year, when DeGeneres' selfie replicated like wildfire online.

Facebook said there were 58 million interactions worldwide on the Oscars, including posts and "likes."

The biggest individual moment for Twitter and Facebook was the same: Lady Gaga's medley of songs from "The Sound of Music."

CBS News releases video referenced in O'Reilly dispute

NEW YORK (AP)—CBS News on Monday released video from four stories it aired about the Falklands War in 1982, all part of a dispute involving Fox News Channel host Bill O'Reilly and his subsequent statements about covering the war.

None of the stories mentions O'Reilly, then a young CBS reporter, or makes any specific reference to a CBS crew member being hurt.

The television time travel was prompted by a Mother Jones article last week calling into question O'Reilly's claims he reported in a "war zone" or "combat zone" during the brief conflict between Britain and Argentina. Few reporters made it to the front of the war, some 1,000 miles from the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires.

O'Reilly has said that he covered an anti-government demonstration in Buenos Aires that turned violent and that a photographer he was working with was knocked to the ground and was bleeding. Describing the events two years ago, O'Reilly said he "dragged off" the photographer from danger.

O'Reilly

Former CBS News correspondent Eric Engberg, who also was covering the event, characterized O'Reilly's account as "dishonest" and "completely nutty" during a Huffington Post interview on Monday. Engberg said none of the camera operators working the night in question remembers any colleague being injured. The camera person who was said to be hurt has not spoken publicly about the matter.

During one of the CBS reports, then-anchor Dan Rather said that several television crew members were knocked to the ground and that North American television crews were "jostled."

An Engberg report, also released by CBS on Monday, said police fired guns with tear gas and plastic bullets. He said in the report it was unknown how many people were hurt but at least some were seriously injured.

An Associated Press account of the demonstration said that police officers charged a group of about 50 journalists, beating some and trampling others.

"Two news photographers were reported injured by rubber bullets fired by police," said the June 16, 1982, account by AP writer Douglas Grant Mine.

The release of the videos, while providing more detail about the situation O'Reilly faced 33 years ago, did not resolve the issue of whether his retellings of the experience have been completely factual.

In addition to his work at Fox, o'Reilly has become a force in the publishing industry with a series of books on the deaths of historical figures like Abraham Lincoln and Jesus Christ.

Cameron Diaz, Transformers, Kirk Cameron top Razzie Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Cameron Diaz and Kirk Cameron received the dubious honor of being dubbed the year's worst actress and actor at the 35th Annual Golden Raspberry Awards (aka the "Razzies") on Saturday night.

Diaz earned the title for her performances in the raunchy comedies "The Other Woman," in which a wife and two mistresses of the same man team up to make his life miserable, and "Sex Tape," where a couple accidentally releases their private performance to the cloud.

The modern-day remake of "Annie," which also featured Diaz as Miss Hannigan, along with Jamie Foxx and Quvenzhané Wallis as the plucky foster kid, was named worst remake, rip-off or sequel.

Cameron, meanwhile, picked up the award for "Kirk Cameron's Saving Christmas," a widely derided and somewhat self-explanatory faith-based comedy, which also won worst picture, worst screen combo (Cameron and his ego) and worst screenplay.

Razzie favorite Michael Bay was granted worst director for "Transformers: Age of Extinction," or, as the Razzies call it, "Age of Ex-STINKtion." Although Bay's film may have grossed over $1 billion worldwide, that didn't save the silly, explosion-happy movie from more than one Razzie win.

"Transformers" supporting actress Nicola Peltz was spared, but Kelsey Grammer was not as lucky. The five-time Emmy winner picked up worst supporting actor not just for his role as the evil counter-intelligence agent, but also for his performances in "Legends of Oz," ''Think Like a Man Too," and "Expendables 3."

Megan Fox, who gained fame from the "Transformers" franchise, was recognized as worst supporting actress for playing the tenacious reporter April in the Michael Bay-produced "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles."

Ben Affleck was the only one who was spared. The actor-director who won for the terrible 2003 movie "Gigli," was acknowledged with a Razzie redeemer award thanks to his Oscar-winning film "Argo" and his performance in David Fincher's "Gone Girl."

'American Horror Story' actor Woolf dies after accident

AP
In this Oct. 5, 2014 file photo, Ben Woolf arrives at the premiere screening of "American Horror Story: Freak Show" at TCL Chinese Theatre, in Los Angeles, Calif.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ben Woolf, an actor on the TV series "American Horror Story," has died after being injured in a street accident, a spokesman said. He was 34.

Woolf died Monday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, publicist Zack Teperman said. Woolf's family was at his side.

The 4-foot-4 (1.32-meter) actor was hospitalized in critical condition after he was hit by the side mirror of a passing vehicle on an LA-area street.

The motorist, who stopped at the scene Thursday night, wasn't cited or arrested.

Woolf was a cast member on the FX show in its first season, in 2011, when he played a character called the Infantata. In the latest installment, "American Horror Story: Freak Show," he appeared as Meep.

"He was a tremendous professional and an incredibly kind person, beloved by the 'American Horror Story' family," FX and the show's producers said in a statement.

Members of Woolf's family said in a statement that they were overwhelmed by the love and support they've received for him.

Teperman, his publicist, called Woolf "one-of-a-kind," a caring and hard-working man.

Academy acknowledges Joan Rivers' absence from memorial

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences issued a statement Monday acknowledging the complaints that Joan Rivers was not featured in the "In Memoriam" tribute during Sunday night's Oscar ceremony.

"Joan Rivers is among the many worthy artists and filmmakers we were unfortunately unable to feature in the In Memoriam segment of this year's Oscar show. She is, however, included in our In Memoriam gallery on Oscar.com," the statement said.

Badlwin

Fans on social media complained about Rivers' absence from the tribute. Elaine Stritch was also a notable omission from the entertainment world, though her career was built on stage, not on screen.

Rivers was also not well-known for her film work, though she made a regular sideline out of her snarky critiques of red-carpet fashion.

Elizabeth Much, a spokeswoman for Rivers' daughter, Melissa Rivers, said she would have no comment.

Suzan-Lori Parks' trilogy wins Kennedy Prize for Drama

NEW YORK (AP)—Suzan-Lori Parks' historical trilogy set during the Civil War has won a theater award honoring the late U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy, one of the largest prizes given for dramatic writing.

Parks' "Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)" traces the journey of a slave named Hero, his wife, Penny, and the best friend he betrayed, Homer. Spanning a total of three hours, the plays premiered last fall at the Public Theater to largely rave reviews. It is the initial trio in a planned nine-play cycle.

The Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History honors a new play or musical that explores the United States' past and deals with "great issues of our day." Given every year through Columbia University, it comes with $100,000.

The winning play Monday beat out four other finalists: Robert Schenkkan's "The Great Society," Marcus Gardley's "The House That Will Not Stand," and two by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins—"Appropriate" and "An Octoroon"

The prize was established by Kennedy's sister Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith in consultation with playwright Tony Kushner. It is given every Feb. 22, the anniversary of the late senator's birth.

Overpacking for business trip prompts questions of trust

DEAR ABBY: I'm in my 40s and my boyfriend of three years is 12 years older. We are in love and our relationship is great. He travels for work and lives in another state, so he flies in to see my daughter and me every other week. Because he is older, he uses Viagra, and it's kept at my place in a drawer. I assumed that's where it was always kept.

Abby, when he left for his trip yesterday, he took his Viagra with him! He says he grabbed the bottle without thinking and that I'm overreacting. The rest of his things are kept in his travel bag, so it's not like he just gathered up all of his pills. They were the only ones. Now he's upset with me because "I don't trust him."

Can you help me get my thinking straight? I caught him lying about something when we first started dating, so he's not all squeaky clean like he acts.

SUSPICIOUS IN VIRGINIA

DEAR SUSPICIOUS: Unless your boyfriend was prescribed the Viagra for a condition other than ED, I'd say you have a right to be suspicious. Because his little blue pills were kept apart from his other medications, it took special effort for him to pack them. Talk with him further because he may have been contemplating a "party of one" during his travels and not have been looking for adventure.

DEAR ABBY: I'm in the middle of a situation that I'm not sure how to deal with. My mother's husband made a pass at my boyfriend. My boyfriend thinks I should tell her.

Abby, my mother and her husband are in their 70s, and I don't want to cause problems in their marriage. I'd like to write it off as a "misunderstanding," but my stepdad has a history of doing things like this.

ANONYMOUS IN OREGON

DEAR ANONYMOUS: If your boyfriend didn't already, he should tell your stepfather the pass was unwelcome and he doesn't want it to happen again. If it does, you and your boyfriend should talk to your mother about it and explain why she'll be seeing less of you unless she visits you—alone. Because this isn't the first time your stepfather has acted inappropriately, it won't be news to her. And because she has tolerated his behavior in the past, I doubt it will cause problems between them now.

DEAR ABBY: My husband's family gave us a large painting that is not our taste at all. We would love to get rid of it, but of course we feel obligated to keep it and hang it in order to not hurt their feelings.

They live nearby and visit often, so putting the painting away doesn't seem realistic. We live in a small apartment and there is nowhere "discreet" to hang it. Plus, it is too large to take to our offices.

Other than staging a robbery, are there any options that would keep everyone happy?

GRINNING & BEARING IT

DEAR GRINNING: Another option would be to level with your in-laws. Tell them you are grateful for their generosity, but the artwork is not your taste, and then ask if they would mind if you exchanged it.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

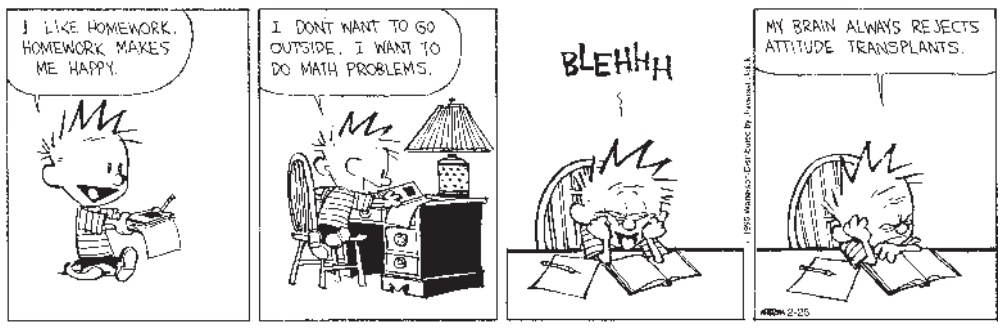
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

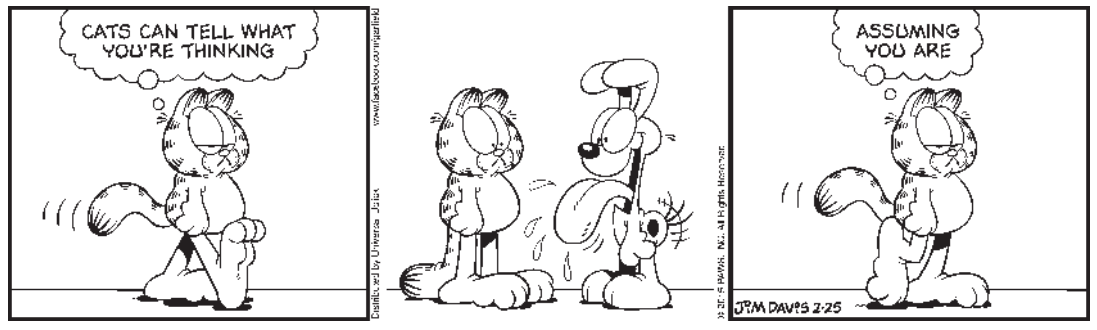
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I LIKE HOMEWORK. HOMEWORK MAKES ME HAPPY.
I DONT WANT TO GO OUTSIDE. I WANT TO DO MATH PROBLEMS.
BLEHHHH
MY BRAIN ALWAYS REJECTS ATTITUDE TRANSPLANTS.

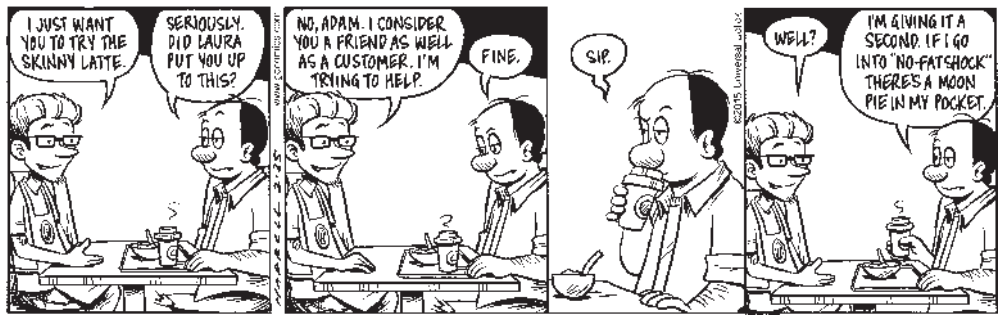
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



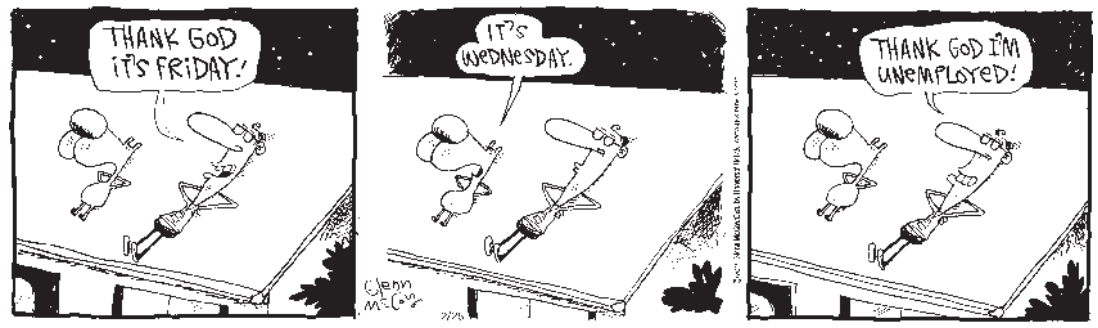
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I JUST WANT YOU TO TRY THE SKINNY LATTE.
SERIOUSLY. DID LAURA PUT YOU UP TO THIS?
NO, ADAM. I CONSIDER YOU A FRIEND AS WELL AS A CUSTOMER. I'M TRYING TO HELP.
FINE.
SIP.
WELL?
I'M GIVING IT A SECOND. IF I GO INTO "NO-FAT-SHOCK" THERE'S A MOON PIE IN MY POCKET.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

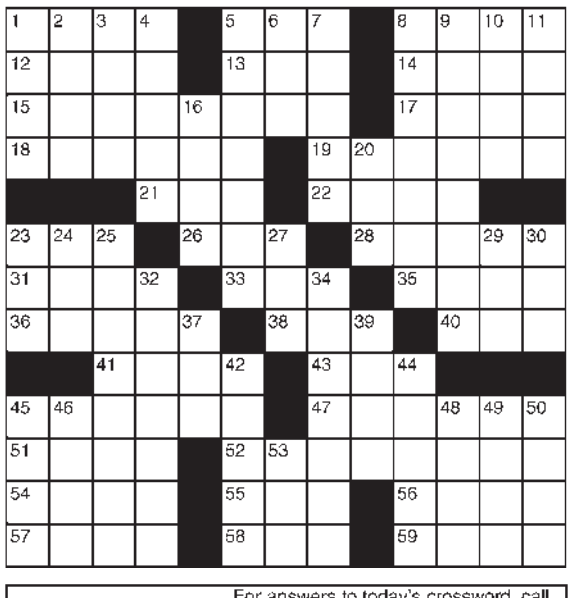
ACROSS
1 Glaswegian gal
5 "— & Order"
8 — Alto, Calif.
12 Canyon phenomenon
13 "A Chorus Line" song
14 Privy to
15 Miscellaneous written passages
17 Simple
18 Soft hat
19 Whirlpool
21 Zilch
22 Apiece
23 Docs' org.
26 Conger, for one
28 Wails like a banshee
31 Some offspring
33 Vast expanse
35 Filthy material
36 Eucalyptus eater
38 Last (Abbr.)
40 Whatever amount
41 Uppercase
43 In medias —
45 "Wuthering Heights" writer
47 Alibi
51 Carry on
52 "Fiddler on the Roof" village
54 Staffer
55 Young chap
56 Approach
57 Pleased
58 Bond, e.g.
59 Skin art, for short

DOWN
1 Emblem on Canada's flag
2 Dermatologist's case
3 Roe source
4 Wise lawgiver
5 Spots
6 Pismire
7 Use a loom
8 Stabs
9 Curse
10 Mislay
11 Cameo stone
16 One of HOMES
20 Erstwhile acorn
23 Request
24 Cow's comment
25 Big snake
27 Romanian money
29 Sister
30 Pigpen
32 On an angle
34 "So soon?"
37 Suitable
39 Libretto
42 Easter stickers
44 Bloodhound's clue
45 Put your feat in your mouth
46 Bar
48 Eye layer
49 Old card game
50 "I'm all —"
53 Siesta

Solution time: 24 mins.

R	E	A	P	■	S	L	Y	■	P	A	R	R
O	G	R	E	■	H	I	E	■	O	L	I	O
P	O	T	A	T	O	E	S	■	T	O	L	L
E	S	S	■	R	O	D	■	S	P	E	L	L
■	■	■	P	I	T	■	G	O	O	■	■	■
R	E	L	A	X	■	P	A	B	U	L	U	M
P	L	A	N	■	A	L	L	■	R	E	N	O
M	Y	S	T	E	R	Y	■	B	R	A	I	D
■	■	■	O	R	B	■	P	O	I	■	■	■
D	R	A	M	A	■	L	I	Z	■	P	E	P
R	A	N	I	■	P	A	N	O	R	A	M	A
A	T	O	M	■	E	S	T	■	I	R	I	S
G	E	N	E	■	W	H	O	■	B	A	R	S

Yesterday's answer 2-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Justin Berfield, 29; Chelsea Handler, 40; Sean Astin, 44; Tea Leoni, 49.

Happy Birthday: A reserved approach to education, financial and medical concerns will help you avoid setbacks. Emotional matters are best controlled in a practical manner. Not everyone will be easy to deal with, but if you are reluctant to follow what others do, you will be the one to benefit in the end. A disciplined attitude will speak volumes about your capabilities. Your numbers are 6, 17, 20, 24, 27, 32, 41.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Get together with old friends or discuss future plans with someone you love. Take care of paperwork that is time-sensitive. Do something special for someone who has stood by you in the past. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Consider what you are told, but do your own research. Too much of anything will turn in to a costly affair. An emotional matter will lead to a deceptive situation. Do your best to stabilize a relationship by being straightforward. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): It's fun to dream, but don't create a fantasy world that will hurt your current status with a personal or business partner. Focus on going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure you maintain a good rapport. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't be afraid to be different. Taking a different path will give you an inside view of a situation that is festering in the background with a peer or colleague. Stay on top of matters, but don't fuel the fire. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Step into the limelight and offer suggestions based on what you know to be true, and you will get the support you need to follow a dream. The feedback you get will encourage travel, knowledge and communication. Hold out for the best deal possible. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Someone you thought you could trust will disappoint you. Don't share your personal thoughts or secrets with anyone. Put more effort into doing your own thing and you'll avoid interference. Home improvements can be made if kept simple. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't procrastinate -- take action. Your interest in different philosophies and cultures will lead you to interesting events and seminars. You will have an opportunity to make new friends as well as gather facts that will help you excel. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take care of responsibilities quickly and then move on to enjoyable projects. A change in your position will turn in your favor. Don't allow anyone to disrupt the way you live or the things you do at home to relax. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Partnerships will make a difference to your outlook and opinion. Make changes at home that will ensure comfort, ease your stress and make your life more enjoyable. Love is in the stars, and sharing with someone special will make your life better. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick close to home. Travel and communication will lead to delays and conflicts. A pushy attitude will be met with force. Work on your own in order to accomplish the most. Take a conservative approach to whatever you pursue. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Looking back will help you move forward. Don't be discouraged just because someone says no. Plan to take action on your own and follow through with your plans. Romance will flourish if you are suggestive with your lover. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Use your creative energy to implement personal change. Don't let complaints stand between you and your desires. Problems while traveling can be expected. Someone will meddle or mislead you if given the chance. Refuse to be manipulated. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are creative and driven. You are a dreamer and a survivor.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			1	6	9			
		8				7		
	9	6				3	4	
4								8
1								3
	8	3	7		6	2	5	
			8		1			
		5				4		
		1	4	7	3	5		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	1	9	4	3	5	2	6	8
4	2	3	9	8	6	7	5	1
8	6	5	2	1	7	3	4	9
9	5	6	7	2	8	4	1	3
2	3	8	1	9	4	5	7	6
1	4	7	5	6	3	8	9	2
5	8	2	6	4	1	9	3	7
3	7	1	8	5	9	6	2	4
6	9	4	3	7	2	1	8	5

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/24

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DENTIST DRILLS Solution: 5 letters

F	Y	Y	G	N	I	P	A	H	S	M	A	L	L	E
E	I	A	O	S	G	N	I	L	P	U	O	C	E	T
A	N	L	C	L	E	N	G	I	N	E	U	N	E	A
R	C	A	L	E	L	S	T	S	E	T	O	A	T	T
E	E	A	M	I	D	A	A	W	T	I	N	O	S	O
S	X	H	V	E	N	E	N	E	T	G	O	H	O	R
T	H	C	S	I	L	G	R	A	L	R	I	K	U	O
O	A	E	O	I	T	S	Z	E	C	E	C	S	N	S
R	U	B	R	O	L	I	S	L	P	O	R	Ⓢ	D	S
A	S	U	O	E	L	O	E	M	L	A	Ⓣ	A	E	E
T	T	T	S	I	W	A	P	S	E	Ⓘ	T	R	E	R
I	H	I	R	H	N	O	N	G	Ⓑ	T	R	B	P	P
O	O	E	E	I	R	L	P	T	K	N	A	H	S	M
N	T	E	N	O	I	T	A	R	B	I	V	L	S	O
S	L	G	N	I	N	N	I	P	S	N	W	O	R	C

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Alloy, Angles, Bits, Brass, Canal, Cavities, Cleaning, Compressor, Coolant, Couplings, Crowns, Cutters, Decay, Enamel, Engine, Exhaust, Fear, Filling, Gears, Lock, Metal, Noise, Polisher, Power, Release, Restorations, Root, Rotate, Shank, Shaping, Shrill, Small, Sound, Speed, Spinning, Steel, Sterilization, Tapered, Test, Tooth, Tube, Vibration, Wheel

Yesterday's Answer: Jungle Gym

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 or 19 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

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Other Qualifications:
- At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality.
- Full Time with flexible working hours.
- Salary: $6.05/hr
- Preferably someone who can speak Japanese language fluently.

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Harden's triple-double helps Rockets over Wolves, 113-102

HOUSTON (AP)—James Harden had 31 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his second triple-double this season, leading the Houston Rockets to a 113-102 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Monday night.

Harden got off to a slow start, missing his first seven shots. He got going late in the first quarter, had 13 points at halftime and was a rebound away from wrapping up his fourth career triple-double entering the fourth.

Houston led by nine at the start of the final period, but Andrew Wiggins led a charge that cut the lead to one point with less than 4 minutes left.

The Rockets took over after that, using a 14-2 run, with five points from Harden, to make it 111-98 with less than a minute to go.

Wiggins scored 30 for the Timberwolves, who lost for the third time in four games.

It was the 25th 30-point game this season for Harden, the league's leading scorer. He also helped out on defense, finishing with four blocks to tie a career high.

Houston scored six straight points to extend its lead to 92-78 early in the fourth quarter. Then Wiggins got going, scoring seven points in a 10-0 run that cut the lead to 92-88.

A 3-pointer by Jason Terry about a minute later pushed Houston's lead to eight, before a three-point play by Wiggins started a 7-0 run for Minnesota that made it to 97-96 with about 3 1/2 to play.

Adreian Payne, who made his first NBA start Monday, made a 3 for Minnesota before Wiggins got a steal and finished with a layup for the first five points of a 7-1 run by the Wolves in the third quarter that cut the lead to 76-72.

But the Rockets closed out the period with an 8-3 spurt to extend the lead to 84-75. Harden capped that run when he juked Ricky Rubio, causing him to fall to the court, and finished with a 3-pointer with 3.6 seconds left in the period.

Harden's first basket came with about 3 1/2 minutes left in the second quarter. He was fouled on the shot and made the free throw to put Houston up 45-44.

The Rockets were up by five soon after that when Minnesota used a 10-2 run to take a 56-53 lead. But Harden hit a 3-pointer with less than a second remaining in the half to leave it tied at 56-all at halftime.

AP

Houston Rockets' James Harden (13) pushes past Minnesota Timberwolves' Andrew Wiggins (22) in the second half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Feb. 23, 2015, in Houston.

Grizzlies 90, Clippers 87

In Los Angeles, Mike Conley scored 18 points and Jeff Green added 16 as Memphis hung on to end the Clippers' four-game winning streak.

Marc Gasol added 14 points and Zach Randolph had 10 rebounds as the Grizzlies improved to 15-3 since Green joined the team on Jan. 12. They won using balanced scoring with no one getting 20 points.

Memphis led by eight before the Clippers scored seven in a row to close to 88-87, but Chris Paul lost the ball and Conley was fouled. He made both and the game ended with Matt Barnes throwing the ball into the hands of Courtney Lee.

Paul had 30 points and 10 assists for the Clippers, with Jamal Crawford scoring 15 points off the bench.

Heat 119, 76ers 108

In Miami, Luol Deng made 11 of 14 shots and scored 29 points, and Goran Dragic added 23 points and 10 assists as Miami set a season high for scoring.

Dwyane Wade scored 18 for the Heat, who stayed in the No. 7 spot in the Eastern Conference. Hassan Whiteside added 12 points and 14 rebounds for Miami, which shot 55 percent.

Hollis Thompson scored 22 points for Philadelphia, which got 18 from Nerlens Noel, 16 from Robert Covington, 12 from Henry Sims and 11 from Isaiah Canaan.

It was a good-news day all around for Miami. Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said before the game that Chris Bosh—who has blood clots on a lung, a season-ending issue—will be going home "soon" from a hospital where he's been treated since late last week.

Bulls 87, Bucks 71

In Chicago, Tony Snell scored 20 points, and Nikola Mirotic had 16 points and a career-high 14 rebounds as surging Chicago pounded Milwaukee on the boards.

Pau Gasol added 15 points and 10 rebounds as the Bulls enjoyed a whopping 62-41 advantage on the glass. Joakim Noah had eight points and 16 rebounds on his bobblehead night, and Jimmy Butler finished with 11 points and nine boards.

Milwaukee shot 34 percent (30 for 89) from the field in its second straight loss after a stretch of nine wins in 10 games. Ersan Ilyasova had 15 points and 11 rebounds in his first start since Jan. 27 at Miami.

Chicago played without key reserves Taj Gibson and Kirk Hinrich, who were away from the team due to an illness.

Pelicans 100, Raptors 97

In New Orleans, Alexis Ajinca capped a 16-point performance with a go-ahead layup in the final minute as New Orleans erased an 18-point deficit to beat Toronto.

Luke Babbitt scored a season-high 18 for New Orleans, including a clutch 3-pointer that gave the Pelicans their first lead of the game with 1:55 to go.

The clutch outings by the two reserves helped New Orleans overcome the absence of All-Star Anthony Davis and Ryan Anderson, who were both injured Saturday night in Miami.

Newly acquired Norris Cole scored 15 for New Orleans. Omer Asik added 14 points and 11 rebounds, and Tyreke Evans had 13 points and 12 assists.

Kyle Lowry scored 22 for Toronto, which lost its second straight. Jonas Valanciunas had 17 points and 14 rebounds.

Jazz 90, Spurs 81

In Salt Lake City, Trey Burke scored 23 points as Utah handed San Antonio its third straight loss since returning from the All-Star break.

The Jazz used an energetic defensive effort to turn a season-high 22 Spurs turnovers into 17 points. Forward Gordon Hayward scored 18 despite a poor-shooting night, while Derrick Favors added 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Jazz center Rudy Gobert set the defensive tone early with two first-quarter blocks of Tim Duncan and finished with seven points, 14 rebounds, three blocks and two steals. The Jazz have held their last five opponents under 100 points.

Duncan had 14 points and 10 rebounds. Boris Diaw chipped in 13 points and Cory Joseph had 10.

Celtics 115, Suns 110

In Phoenix, Avery Bradley scored 23 points, Isaiah Thomas burned his former team with eight critical points in the last two minutes as Boston held off Phoenix.

Boston made a season-high 14 3-pointers, 10 in the first half as the Celtics ran out to a 19-point league against the struggling Suns. But Phoenix cut the lead to one on a 3 from Eric Bledsoe with 2:33 remaining.

Thomas, just four days removed from his deadline-day trade to Boston, scored 21 points in his return.

Bledsoe had 21 points and 10 assists in the Suns' eighth loss in the past nine games. Brandon Knight, acquired in another Suns deal last Thursday, had 20 in his first start for his new team.

Nets 110, Nuggets 82

In Denver, Brook Lopez led seven Nets players in double figures with 19 points as Brooklyn won its second consecutive road game.

Deron Williams added 16 points and 12 assists, and Thaddeus Young scored 15 in another solid outing for the Nets since his acquisition last week from Minnesota in exchange for Kevin Garnett. Brooklyn, coming off a 114-105 win at the Los Angeles Lakers last Friday, won back-to-back road games for the first time since mid-January.

Danilo Gallinari had 22 points for the struggling Nuggets, who have lost 16 of 18—including seven in a row at home. It matches their longest losing streak at the Pepsi Center since also dropping seven straight from Feb. 6 to March 2, 2003.

James Hahn finds no substitute for desire and hard work

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The next two months suddenly are loaded with perks James Hahn never imagined.

His victory Sunday at Riviera gives him a two-year exemption on a PGA Tour that took him a decade to reach. He qualified for two World Golf Championships. He's going to the Masters for the first time. What's more, his wife is expecting their first child in three weeks.

But like so many other players who toiled like Hahn, winning is sweeter when looking back, not forward.

"Came from a small town. Didn't do well in college. Was never an All-American. Sold shoes for a living," he said, reciting a journey that sounded more back roads than Autobahn. "And then just one day, the putts started going in and I started playing a little better. Won a couple of golf tournaments, and now I'm here."

If only it were that simple.

Hahn, born in South Korea and raised in the Bay Area, walked through the locker room at Riviera and saw portraits of the past champions. It's an impressive collection, ranging from Ben Hogan to Byron Nelson, from Johnny Miller to Tom Watson, from Fred Couples to Phil Mickelson.

None of them ever worked at Nordstrom.

"I sold a lot of shoes," Hahn said with a smile, the silver trophy from the Northern Trust Open at his side. "I was pretty good at it."

Golf was a little harder.

He tried the mini-tours. He played one year in South Korea, two more in Canada, trying to find his way. What he remembers distinctly is a tournament in Edmonton, Alberta, where he had about $200 in his wallet and was asking himself if it was worth the effort.

And that's when he questioned his own effort.

"I'm sitting there in my room," he said. "I've got to borrow money to pay for my caddie fee. It was a little embarrassing. I was going to borrow money from my parents to get a flight home. And I'm sitting there on the computer going on Craigslist and I start looking for jobs. It kind of hit me like, `Hey, you have an opportunity to do something with your life.' And I was just wasting it, hanging out with friends, partying on the weekends. I wasn't putting in the time."

Perhaps it was that honesty that cleared his mind and allowed him to finish in the top 10 that week. He recalls making around $3,000, which felt closer to $1 million. When he returned to Edmonton a year later, he won.

"I thought I was a millionaire," he said. "I was like, `Dinner's on me, guys. Got $1,000 in my bank account. Don't worry about.' Seeing exactly a year ago where I was and how much work I put into it, and to be able to play golf at that point ... that was a big, big goal of mine, just to keep playing golf."

He has more in the bank account now.

Hahn rolled in a 25-foot birdie putt on the third extra hole at Riviera—the par-3 14th—to beat Dustin Johnson and Paul Casey in a playoff. Hideki Matsuyama, Jordan Spieth, Keegan Bradley and Sergio Garcia all missed the playoff by a shot.

He earned $1.26 million, and when someone asked if it felt like a million, Hahn quickly corrected him.

"No, it is $1 million. It's not like $1 million," he replied with that easy smile.

He spent Wednesday afternoon on the practice range trying to hit 60-yard wedges into small nets because it reminded him of his days as a kid. That came in handy with a flop shot over the back bunker on No. 10 that set up a birdie and allowed him to stay in the playoff with Johnson.

A-Rod back early with Yanks, still avoiding PED specifics

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Alex Rodriguez reported to the New York Yankees three days ahead of schedule. He spoke for 8 1/2 minutes about his season-long drug suspension.

But on his first day back with the team since September 2013, he never said why he resumed the use of performance-enhancing drugs, never explained what he did and avoided getting into any specifics.

"I cringe when I look at some of things I did," Rodriguez said, surrounded by about 40 reporters on the sidewalk outside the Yankees minor league complex. "No mistake that I made has any good answer, no justification. It's unexplainable, and that's on me. I've dug a big hole for myself. Paid a price."

New York asked him to hold a pre-spring training news conference at Yankee Stadium, but Rodriguez declined. The Yankees told them they didn't want him holding one at Steinbrenner Field, where they felt it would be a distraction.

So Rodriguez improvised.

Wearing a green University of Miami sweatsuit, he arrived at Steinbrenner Field on Monday morning for his physical, three days before the first workout for Yankees' position players. Shortly before 1 p.m., he showed up at the minor league complex, a little less than 1 mile away, carrying what appeared to be a tan bat box.

After changing into Yankees' shorts, a T-shirt and a spring training cap, Rodriguez worked out for about an hour. He hit six home runs in 71 swings and took grounders at shortstop.

AP

In this Sept. 14, 2013, file photo, New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez heads to the dugout during their 5-1 loss to the Boston Red Sox in a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston.

Yankees manager Joe Girardi and general manager Brian Cashman say Chase Headley will be their starting third baseman and Rodriguez will compete for at-bats at designated hitter.

Rodriguez called Headley an "excellent addition" to the team. Rodriguez did not take grounders at first base.

"I'm willing to try," he said. "When Joe needs me, I'm going to be ready. I'm here early, trying to get a jump-start. It's a process. It's going to take time."

Suspended for violations of baseball's drug agreement and labor contract, Rodriguez apologized to team officials during a meeting at Yankee Stadium on Feb. 10 and to fans in a statement last week. His handwritten statement to fans offered no details.

"I'm fortunate for a lot of people, especially the commissioner's office, the players' union, the Yankees to give me an opportunity to play the game that I love," he said.

Asked whether he thought the Yankees' organization was on his side, Rodriguez said he didn't know.

"You'd have to ask them," he responded. "I created a big headache for a lot of people. So, I don't blame whoever is mad at me."

When asked if at any point he would address specifics regarding his mistakes, Rodriguez answered: "Right now I'm just focused on making this team. Obviously, it was a rough year."

Before speaking with reporters, Rodriguez spent 10 minutes signing autographs for a group of around 50 fans, who all cheered him.

Rodriguez stopped his SUV near the complex entrance, got out and walked toward the fans, who surged forward and semi-surrounded him. He also posed for photos with many of them, interacting with questions like "Where are you from?"

When he was done, Rodriguez turned to the group of reporters and said, "Let's keep this nice and short."

He said he has no plans to address Yankees teammates as a group.

"I have a lot of good relationships in there," Rodriguez said. "Stayed in touch with a lot of them. I feel welcomed back."

Rodriguez, who turns 40 in July, has not played a full season since 2007 because the suspension, operations on both hips and other injuries.

"I don't know. ... We'll see," Rodriguez said about his body holding up. "If I stay healthy, I can do good things."

He admitted in 2009 that he used performance-enhancing drugs from 2001-03 while with Texas. Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig suspended Rodriguez for 211 games in August 2013, citing conduct from 2010-12 uncovered during MLB's investigation of the Biogenesis of America clinic, which was based in Coral Gables, Florida, not far from Rodriguez's home.

Arbitrator Fredric Horowitz reduced the penalty to the 2014 season, finding "clear and convincing evidence" Rodriguez used three banned substances and twice tried to obstruct baseball's drug investigation. The suspension cost Rodriguez just over $22 million of his $25 million salary last year.

Rodriguez said it's not for him to say if the penalty was fair.

"There's a system in place," Rodriguez said. "I paid my penalty. I'm moving on."

Rodriguez also sued Major League Baseball, the players' association and the Yankees' team physician, then dropped the cases.

He is owed $61 million in the final three seasons of his $275 million, 10-year contract. A marketing agreement signed at the time of his contract provides for five $6 million bonuses he could earn for historic achievements; the Yankees told him they don't plan to pay those.

When asked what he would have done differently the past two years, Rodriguez responded by saying: "I don't have time for that."

Manfred says pace of game rules crucial to luring young fans

PHOENIX (AP)—Commissioner Rob Manfred says new rules intended to speed up the pace of games are aimed at luring younger fans to baseball.

Manfred, speaking publicly on the changes for the first time since they were announced last Friday, said the rules are a "measured" approach worked out with the players' association.

This season, batters will be required to have one foot in the batter's box and pitchers and batters will be required to be ready to go at the conclusion of television commercials.

"The issue of attracting a younger audience and a pace of game is related," he said.

Manfred said he has four children in their 20s.

"I have a passing familiarity with that generation," he said, "and one thing I can say for sure is their attention span seems to be shorter than the rest of ours."

Last season, the average length of a major league game was a record 3 hours, 2 minutes.

"I certainly want to reverse the trend of increasing the length of the game," Manfred said, "and I'm really intent on the idea that we're going to have an average game time that's going to start with a `two' next year as opposed to a `three.'"

The commissioner spoke at a news conference on spring training media day, an event that draws the managers and general managers from the 15 clubs that train in Arizona.

Any rules changes have to be done with the cooperation of the players' association, Manfred said.

"I talked with (players union executive director) Tony Clark on Thursday, the night before the changes were announced," Manfred said. "I had a very positive conversation with Tony. We began these discussions with a conceptual understanding between Tony and me that we were going to proceed with caution on pace of the game."

He said they wanted to make sure nothing was done to "change the way the game is played."

Manfred declined to speculate on what might be done if the rule changes don't have the desired result.

"I have said repeatedly that I think pace of play is going to be an ongoing, multi-year evolutions," Manfred said, "a series of changes over a period of time. We were pleased with the experiment with a pitch clock in the Arizona Fall League. We were pleased enough with the experiment that it was expanded it to Double-A and Triple-A.

"I have no set position with respect to whether we're going to go beyond that at this point," he said.

He said, "The reason we're doing experimentation is to make sure we understand it really well before we make a decision on what we're going to do at the big league level. And obviously that's a (collective) bargaining topic as well."

A sampling of managers showed they are in favor of the new rules.

"I don't think it's going to be a major adjustment," Kansas City manager Ned Yost said. "Except for a few guys."

"There's guys you sit there in the dugout and then they take 45 seconds in between pitchers," he said. "I'm like, `Get your tail in there and let's go.' That (the rules) hopefully will eliminate that."

With stricter rules in the minors, the next generation will be accustomed to a faster pace, Arizona manager Chip Hale said.

"It's going to take some time," he said. "Once you get this generation of minor league kids that are even under harder rules to the big leagues, you'll see them play the game quicker. And you might not even have to have rules."

Players are subject to a possible $500 fine for violating the batter's box rule. Manfred said the names of those fined will not be made public.

As for the drop in offense in the majors, Manfred said he's waiting to see if it really is a problem before considering any changes to help.

He was asked about the possibility of eliminating the call of low strikes.

`If and when we reach the conclusion that we have a lack of offense problem that's persistent and needs to be addressed," he said, "there's a list of topics that we've thought about and that is one on the list."

Manfred said it was just speculation of possible action when he earlier spoke of eliminating defensive shifts.

On another matter, Manfred said whether he would do anything about Pete Rose's ban from baseball "will depend on whether or when I receive a request from Mr. Rose."

"I'm not going to comment on the substance of Mr. Rose's situation since ultimately I have to make that decision," Manfred said. "But the process will be set as a result of private communications between Mr. Rose and my office."

FIFA recommends November-December for World Cup in Qatar

By GRAHAM DUNBAR
AP SPORTS WRITER

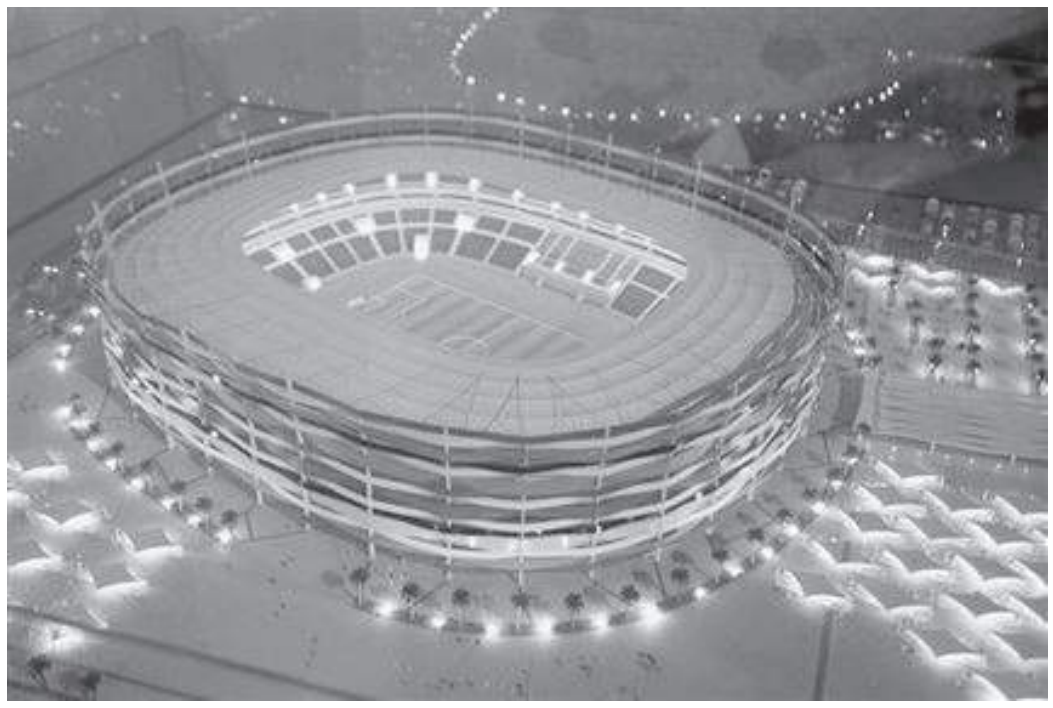
A FIFA task force on Tuesday recommended playing the 2022 World Cup in November-December to avoid the summer heat in Qatar.

FIFA said the task force chose the "most viable period" over other proposals to play in January, April or May, dates favored mostly by European soccer. FIFA also said the tournament should be shorter than the current 32-day schedule.

The plan must be approved by the FIFA executive committee, chaired by President Sepp Blatter, at a March 19-20 meeting in Zurich.

Blatter, who is an IOC member, has long favored November-December to avoid clashing with the Winter Olympics, scheduled for February 2022.

"Given that the two bidding cities for the 2022 Winter Olympics—Almaty (Kazakhstan) and Beijing (China)—pledged recently to host the winter games from Feb. 4-20, 2022; that the month of Ramadan begins on April 2 in 2022; and that consistently hot conditions prevail from May to September in Qatar, the only remaining effective option is the November-December window," FIFA said in a statement.



AP

In this Sept. 16, 2010 file photo, Qatar presents a model of its Al-Gharafa stadium, as the host of the 2022 World Cup, in Doha, Qatar.

European clubs and leagues oppose FIFA's proposal, which shuts them down for several weeks in midseason.

The FIFA executive committee chose Qatar as host in December 2010, when the gas-rich emirate won a five-nation bidding contest to host the tournament in the traditional June-July slot.

Tuesday's recommendation comes 17 months after the FIFA board—minus several members who have left since the hosting vote after being implicated in corruption—ordered a consultation on finding the best dates in Qatar.

The process was widely seen to have been pre-judged by Blatter, who insisted on November-December as the only realistic choice.

Blatter also reversed his position on the winter World Cup debate. After the December 2010 vote, he said the tournament would be played in summer and the dates could only be changed at Qatar's request.

Stakes high as teams try to judge character at NFL combine

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—The questions were similar, and Dorial Green-Beckham had virtually the same response for each one.

"I'm disappointed in myself for all those things I did at Missouri," said the wide receiver, who spent last season on the sideline in large part because of legal troubles, including allegations that he pushed a woman down a flight of stairs.

Green-Beckham repeated some version of that nine times during the 10 minutes he spent with reporters at the NFL scouting combine last week. He could have said it 100 times, and it wouldn't have answered - or ended - the questions.

Because of the domestic violence scandals involving Ray Rice, Adrian Peterson and others that came to light last season, the scrutiny for the receiver with first-round talent but all those character questions is only beginning.

Now more than ever, teams are using the combine not so much to find out what sort of player they're getting - they can watch the tapes for that—as what kind of person they're getting. The 15-minute interviews the teams get with the players, along with tests that evaluate their psychological profile, have never been more important.

"It changes with the times," Giants coach Tom Coughlin said of the vetting process. "We are a microcosm of society. We have our problems just like everyone else, and hopefully we will be able to help educate our people about what is not acceptable."

Placing the issue into even sharper focus is the fact that arguably the most talented player in the upcoming draft, quarterback Jameis Winston, has been a fixture in police blotters during an athletically stellar but personally challenging three years at Florida State.

Sexual assault accusations against him while in college didn't result in charges, but his past puts him at more risk under the NFL's new personal-conduct policy, beefed up in the aftermath of the Rice case.

The policy, which calls for a six-game suspension after a first offense, makes clear that a criminal conviction isn't needed for the league to determine players took part in prohibited conduct. The NFL will have its own investigative arm, and the commissioner can use his discretion based, in part, on a player's previous behavior.

BLUE HAUS

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held to three free throws.

The match remained close in the third period with Armatech mostly on top before Bammy's began to convert pull-up jumpers anew in the last four minutes of that quarter, turning a 41-45 deficit to a 52-48 lead. Jun Tabora, Alex Ocampo, Jun Alipio, and Rodney Catalla alternated in hitting medium-ranged shots for Bammy's, while big man Jorge De Guzman capitalized on the foul-troubled Bruce Berline to get those offensive boards and score on a couple of point-blanked shots.

Bammy's went on to carry its third quarter momentum in the opening minutes of the fourth to bring the lead back to twin digits, 62-52, with Ocampo drilling two jumpers, Alipio and Amor Zapata adding one each, and De Guzman hitting a reverse layup.

Bammy's never looked back, as the best that Armatech could do was cut the deficit to 5, 64-69, past the halfway mark of the fourth. Armatech could have moved closer if not for its misses from the foul line. Berline and Yosh Gabaldon earlier combined for 0-for-4 from the stripe and the former missed another pair, while Ferdie Tobias only had a split following his completed and-1 play that sliced the deficit to 5.

Bammy's hung on to the lead as it consistently hit those pull-up jumpers and spread the floor well in the last two minutes to break Armatech's pressure defense.

In the first game, Blue Haus blew out KB Hite after turning on the heat in the second quarter.

Blue Haus was clinging to a 22-20 lead at the end of the first period when it more than doubled up KB Hite's output in the second, 30-14, to take a comfortable 50-34 halftime advantage.

Blue Haus notched its seventh win in as many games in the inaugural league and hopes to extend the streak when it takes on Bammy's today at 6:30pm. The winner of tonight's first match will advance to the finals, while the loser will collide against the victor of the KB Hite-Armatech tiff for the second and last finals ticket on Friday.

First Game

Blue Haus 102 – Mendoza 20, Guiab 18, Santos 16, Diaz 11, Fernandez 10, Moises 6, Palacios 6, Macoto 5, Factor 2.

KB Hite 75 – Mungcal 23, Pangelinan 19, Plinske 10, Duenas 7, Verano 6, Morales 3, Sison 3.

Scoring by quarters: 22-20, 50-34, 80-52, 102-75.

Second Game

Bammy's 81 – Ocampo 16, Alipio 15, De Guzman 13, Sampang 10, Catalla 9, Tabora 7, Vargas 3, Zapata 2.

Armatech 68 – Montano 16, Gabaldon 11, Abuy 10, Berline 10, Poquiz 5, Tobias 5, Park 4, Tolentino 4.

Scoring by quarters: 15-13, 32-34, 52-48, 81-68.

KAIPAT'S

From Page 28

a big part on the Fielders' win pitching half of the ninth, relieving Jimmy Brel when Camacho was about to bat.

Brel, with the score tied at 7-all, was in a jam in the top of the ninth after losing Sablan with a lead-off walk and the GSM veteran later moved the Brewers ahead after scoring on a wild pitch.

The Fielders starter, still with no outs, then gave up consecutive singles to Pat Alepuyo and Marvin Kaipat, prompting manager Pat Tenorio to bring in Villagomez.

Villagomez shut down the Brewers' batters after that striking out Camacho, Danny Agulto, and Jesse Brel setting up the thrilling finale in the bottom of the ninth.

Jimmy Brel pitched 8 1/2 innings for the Fielders allowing three earned runs on 12 hits with four strikeouts and three walks.

Kaiapt went 2-for-4 with one run scored and two RBIs, while Secharmidal, despite a 1-for-4 plate appearance, made two runs and drove in three more—a bases-clearing three RBI triple in the Fielders' four-run fourth-inning barrage.

The Brewers' loss wasted Alepuyo and Jun Rabauliman's 2-for-5 performances at the plate with the former scoring one run and the latter making two runs and an RBI single in the top of the first.

Last Friday, the Fielders coasted to a 15-1 decision to keep the Jets winless after six matches.

WANG

From Page 28

ther is already 90 years old but still practices tai chi in China," added Wang, who works as a therapist and acupuncturist at Hinemlu Massage in Garapan.

He said that tai chi is a special form of exercise that allows all parts of your body and muscles to move.

"The slow movements are easy to learn. That's why it eases the pressures brought by stress of everyday living. The slow breathing improves blood circulation on your body. Once you practice regularly, your chi or energy also improves," added Wang.

Wang and his assistant Mei Demapan had already attracted a regular group of close to 15 people that includes former assistant press secretary Catherine Perry.

"Cathy can also be a master. She has mastered some of the moves and most of the time we let her lead the group."

Tai chi's origins can be traced on Buddhist and Taoist monks in the Wudang mountains in Hubei province, which is at the easternmost part of Central China.

"I started at 9 years old and learned the eight basic forms from a master who taught me in Wudang. Tai chi has different sets of movements and some have 108 movements," said Wang.

Demapan added that they sometimes perform in cultural festivals on Saipan and other local events to further promote tai chi.

"We started seven years ago. Before it was just Master Kevin and I. That's why we also perform in various events. Sometimes with a broad sword or a fan as a prop."

She added that Wang also teaches young kids, from six to 18 years old, every Saturday at the Carolinian Utt in order to pass it on to the next generation.

PAIRE

From Page 27

Church converting his shot in the 49th minute.

Kanoa 2, Tan Holdings 2

Kanoa FC saved a draw against Tan Holdings FC after fighting back in the second half.

Down at the break, 0-2, Kanoa drew back-to-back goals (35th and 36th minute) from Brian Lubao and Merrick Toves to force a standoff.

Earlier in the first half, Tan Holdings enjoyed the driver's seat as Kohtaro Goto drew first blood in the 18th minute and Taka Borja scored in the 25th.

Co-ed games in the youth league are played in two 30-minute halves.

GIRLS U15
Matansa 1, MP United 0

Matansa collected its third win in Week 2 after its girls U15 crew edged MP United.

Bernadette Horey posted the lone goal in the match to give Matansa its first win this season.

Matansa settled for a draw against Shirley's FC in its first game this spring season.

Shirley's 4,
Tan Holdings 2

Shirley's FC also barged into the win column after downing Tan Holdings.

Three different players scored for Shirley's with Diana Maniacop getting two goals and Katherine Magat and De Jana Muna earning one each. Mary Kay Alferos and Chloe Salvosa tallied the two goals for Tan Holdings.

Magat and Maniacop delivered goals in the 11th and 23rd minute, respectively, to put Shirley's on top after Tan Holdings held the lead in the first 10 minutes of play off Alferos' goal. Maniacop made it 3-1 with her goal in the 61st minute, but Tan Holdings threatened 11 minutes later with Salvosa's shot. An insurance goal from Muna six minutes before the match wrapped up gave Shirley's its first win.

Gideon, Isaiah draw first blood

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Gideon and Isaiah pulled off close wins in the opening of the 4th Genesis Cup Christian Churches Inter-Color Basketball League last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Isaiah prevailed in the curtain-raiser against Jeremiah, 50-47, while Gideon eked out a similar 3-point victory over Samuel in the second match, 63-60.

It was a come-from-behind triumph for Gideon, which had to climb its way back from a 29-41 halftime deficit.

Lawrence Borja and Bradley Demapan teamed up in Gideon's recovery, combining for 25 of the team's 34 points in the final 20 minutes of play. Borja finished with a team-high 25 markers, while Demapan added 17. Joel Buniag chipped in 7 points, Rene Batallones contributed 5, Allan David logged 4, and three others combined for Gideon's remaining 5 markers.

Jerome Reyes led Samuel's losing cause with his 25 points. He had an explosive first half, dropping 16 to lift Samuel to the double-digit advantage, but slowed down in the final frame, drilling only 5. Ronnie Guevarra backed Reyes up, tallying 18 with 10 of them coming in their first half domination.

In the first game, Marlo Ibanez and Oliver Gragasin powered Isaiah to its debut win. They scored nearly half of the team's total points and were the only two players to hit double figures. The lefty Ibanez registered 12 points, while Gragasin logged 10. Nine other Isaiah players made it to the board for Isaiah to provide enough support to Ibanez and Gragasin.

While Gragasin and Ibanez drew help from their teammates, it was a different story for Ramsa Tenepere. The Jeremiah forward almost singlehandedly carried the fight for his team, scoring 23 points. Jay Nunag was the only other Jeremiah player to score more than two baskets for Jeremiah and the rest of the team combined for only 14 points.

Meanwhile, action in the Genesis Cup continued last Monday with Daniel playing Caleb in the first match and Ezekiel dueling Joshua in the second. Results of both games will be reported in *Saipan Tribune*'s Thursday edition.

Games in the Genesis Cup are played every Monday and Friday. This Friday, Gideon will collide with Caleb in the first match at 6pm, while in the second tiff at 8pm, Jeremiah will take on Daniel.

First Game

Isaiah 50– Ibanez 12, Gragasin 10, Brillo 9, Fatialofa 4, Bono 4, Cortez 2, De Leon 2, Vergara 2, Puno 2, Bulaklak 1.

Jeremiah 47 – Tenepere 23, Nunag 9, Cabaoas 4, Castro 4, Daeng 2, Lansangan 2, Lizardo 2.

Scoring by halves: 21-19, 50-47.

Second Game

Gideon 63 – Borja 25, Demapan 17, Buniag 7, Batallones 5, David 4, Santos 2, Palma 2, Reyes 1.

Samuel 60– Reyes 21, Guevarra 18, Calibo 7, Bordon 7, Borja 3, Badal 2, Belgado 2.

Scoring by quarters: 29-41, 63-60.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Isaiah's Fred Fatialofa, left, plays tough defense on Jeremiah's Jay Nunag, who was later called for a traveling violation during the second quarter of their game in the 4th Genesis Cup last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Paire FC eases past Kanoa, 4-1

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club regrouped quickly after losing its season debut, topping Kanoa FC, 4-1, in their boys U15 match in the 2015 NMIFA Youth Spring League last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Jefferson Sagun scored a pair of goals to help Paire win its Week 2 game and recover from a 0-8 loss to Tan Holdings FC in the league's opening day last Feb. 14. Raffi Lee and Kaden Church registered the two other goals for Paire, while Brian Lubao was the lone Kanoa FC player to hit the scoreboard.

Lubao found the back of the net in the 33rd minute to equalize. Sagun scored six minutes earlier to put Paire on top. The match remained tied in the first half before Paire seized control of the match early in the second half with Lee getting into the board in the 46th minute and Sagun bagging his second two minutes later. Church completed Paire's second-half domination with his goal in the 56th.

In the other boys U15 matches over the weekend. MP United and Tan Holdings 1 also earned easy wins.

MP United played Tan Holdings FC-2 in the first match last Friday at the Oleai pitch and cruised to an 8-0 win.

Edwin Kim led MP United with his hat-trick, while Cody Leon contributed two. Oliver Lee, Clayton Izuka, and Tony Kim chipped in one goal apiece.

In the second game, Tan Holdings FC-1 shut down Matansa FC, 3-0.

Anthony Fruit starred in the win with his twin goals, while Mark Esalan tallied one.

BOYS U18
Tan Holdings 2, MP United 1

Tan Holdings was also victorious in the boys U18 division, slipping past defending champion MP United last Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

Yoshi Mafnas and Sean Perez lit up the scoreboard for Tan Holdings, while Kyke Chung notched the lone goal for MP United. Mafnas gave Tan Holdings the lead with his shot in the 16th minute, while Chung evened up the count three minutes before the first half ended. Perez broke the deadlock in the 83rd and Tan Holdings hung on tight in the remaining minutes to hand MP United its first loss.

Matansa 5, Paire 1

The other boys U18 tiff saw Matansa routing Paire at the Oleai pitch.

Joshua De Leon led Matansa with his brace, while Kenneth Mafnas, Ryu Tanzawa, and Evan Belcher recorded one goal each.

Tanzawa broke the ice for Matansa in the first half, while the team's four other goals were registered in the second half. Paire fired blanks in the opening frame before avoiding a shutout in the second half, thanks to Sagun's goal late in the final frame.

CO-ED 12
Matansa 4, Paire 1

Matansa got its second win in Week 2 as its co-ed U12 team also topped Paire at the Hopwood pitch last Saturday.

It took a while before Matansa's offense heated and when it did, the goals came in bunches.

Benito Lolobeyong and Justin Charles Achas scored in the 36th and 39th minute, respectively, while Matansa's last two goals were made in a span of two minutes with Razeff Altamirano hitting the board in the 44th and the player wearing jersey No. 14 (no player with jersey No. 14 was listed on the roster) in the 46th.

Paire answered only once to Matansa's attack with Kaden

See PAIRE on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Paire Football Club player jumps in between his teammate and a Kanoa defender to join the chase for the ball during the first half of their boys U15 game in the NMIFA youth league last Saturday morning at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

MHS favorite to win vs MBA

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Unless a miracle or a sudden twist of fate happens defending champion Marianas High School is expected to breeze through the opening day of the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League playoffs.

League-leading and favorite MHS takes on lowly Marianas Baptist Academy, which dropped all of its 12 games, at 3pm on Thursday at the MHS Gymnasium.

The Dolphins twice defeated the Stormz in the elimination round, first a 66-34 thrashing on Jan. 17 and a 90-49 drubbing on Feb. 18 that completed their 12-game sweep.

Saipan Southern finished second with a 9-3 record, while Mt. Carmel School and Kagman High School ended up tied with 7-5 cards. However, the Knights clinched the third spot based on head-to-head point differential.

Kagman dropped to fifth as Tinian High School, which only competes in the final tournament, receives the fourth seeding automatically.

Grace Christian Academy (5-7) and Saipan International School (2-10) complete the eight-team field that made it to the final round.

MHS' impending victory against MBA would earn them a spot on the second round of the competition where they will meet the winner of the 3pm match between Kagman and Tinian.

Southern faces SIS at 4:30pm also on Thursday, while MCS takes on GCA in the 7:30pm last game with the winners clashing on Friday at 12:30pm.

The third place match will be played on Saturday, Feb. 28, at 11:30pm, while the championship match is slated at 1pm with the first team to clinch the first finals berth enjoying a twice-to-beat edge.

MISO executive director Nick Gross said all loser's bracket matches will use a running clock format and reminded all teams that the game times are only estimates that's why coaches need to make sure their players are on the gym at an earlier time.

"Make sure to have your teams are prepared to play 10-15 minutes after the completion of the previous games," Gross said.

Harden's triple-double helps Rockets over Wolves, 113-102
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Blue Haus, Bammy's boost finals bid

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Blue Haus and Bammy's Restaurant moved closer to a finals stint in the 2015 Graphics Invitational Masters Basketball League after winning their respective playoff matches last Monday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Blue Haus cruised to a 102-75 victory over KB Hite in the first game, while Bammy's also posted a double-digit winning margin against Armatech, 81-68.

Bammy's may have prevailed by twin digits, but it was not an easy victory for the team that collapsed late in the second and only managed to regain its momentum in the closing minutes of the third before finishing off Armatech early in the fourth.

Bammy's once held a 29-17 advantage after outgunning Armatech in the first seven minutes of the second canto. A 17-3 windup brought Armatech back in the game and even gave the team a shaky lead at halftime, 34-32. James Abuy anchored the rally, scoring 10 in the second frame, including 8 straight markers, while Bammy's was

See BLUE HAUS on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Bammy's Restaurant's Boboy Sampang pulls up for a shot against three Armatech defenders during the fourth quarter of their playoff game in the 2015 Graphics Invitational Masters Basketball League last Monday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Kaipat's walk-off single lifts Fielders

By JON PEREZ
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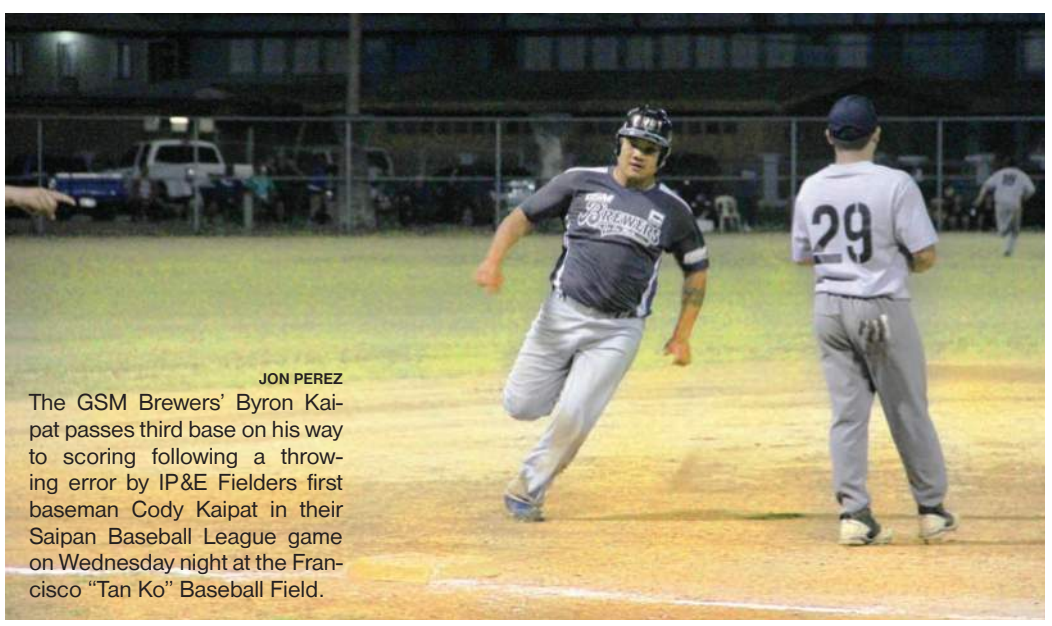
REPORTER



JON PEREZ
The GSM Brewers' Byron Kaipat passes third base on his way to scoring following a throwing error by IP&E Fielders first baseman Cody Kaipat in their Saipan Baseball League game on Wednesday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Baseball Field.

Former Saipan Little League standout Cody Kaipat's played big on Monday night, hitting a ninth-inning walk-off single to lift the IP&E Fielders to a 10-9 win over the GSM Brewers in the Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco M. "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The win was the third straight for the Fielders and its fourth overall to improve to 4-3, while ending the reigning champion Brewers' string of five consecutive victories.

The Brewers, despite suffering their first loss of the season, remains on top with a 5-1 record followed by the Saipan Stevedore Yankees' 4-1 slate, while the Fielders are at third. The Falcons (3-2), North Starz (1-4), and the Jets (0-6) complete the standings.

The Fielders also avenged their 13-3 loss to the Brewers at the opening of the 2015 season on Jan. 12.

It was a thrilling match with the Brewers holding on to a slim 9-7 lead in the bottom of the ninth after Fielders catcher Verlance Secharmidal scored on a Cedric Ada RBI single.

Secharmidal led off for the Fielders and got on first on an error by Brewers third baseman Manny Sablan. He advanced to second after Ton Leon Guerrero was hit by pitch before moving to scoring position on Ton Tenorio's fielder's choice.

Secharmidal, before Tenorio's fielder's choice, was left momentarily stranded on base after Leon Guerrero was tagged out on a putout play by second baseman Diego Camacho to shortstop Jesse Brel, while Jose Lizama struck out against Brewers closer Lenny Sablan.

Ada singled to bring in Secharmidal to move the Fielders within one, 9-8. Kaipat then stepped up and delivered the winning hit.

K.J. Villagomez also played

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Wang wants tai chi to be part of community

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Tai chi master Kevin Wang is hoping to further promote the ancient martial art to the community for its health benefits.

Wang, who conducts regular morning sessions at the American Memorial Park's beachfront every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:30am to 9am, said tai chi offers the same benefits as yoga.

JON PEREZ
Tai chi master Kevin Wang, right, leads in performing some of the basic moves of the Chinese ancient martial last Friday morning at the American Memorial Park's beachfront.

"I want to share and teach the techniques to the local people here on Saipan. It is open to anyone at any age. It has the same benefits to your health like yoga where your mind and body can achieve inner peace," said Wang in an interview with *Saipan Tribune.*

"Anybody is welcome to try tai chi. It is good for the old and the young, my grandfa-

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